

# News Release

## Children's Dental Health Project

1990 M Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington DC 20036

**Contact:**

**Mike Ambrose, Communications Director**  
(202) 833-8288, [mambrose@cdhp.org](mailto:mambrose@cdhp.org)



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### CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH PROJECT CONGRATULATES SENATE ON INTRODUCTION OF DENTAL HEALTH BILL

WASHINGTON – The Children's Dental Health Project applauds Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) on their introduction of S. 2740, the *Dental Health Provider Shortage Act*. The bill, designed to improve access to dental services, especially in rural areas, features these provisions:

- Incentives for dentists and hygienists to practice in underserved areas and retention bonuses for dental experts to work with Indian Health Services;
- Grants to community health centers to start or expand dental programs and to establish dental residency training programs;
- Grants to dentists to expand access via private practice expansion in underserved areas;
- Grants to state agencies to simplify Medicaid enrollment and payment processes and to encourage provider participation;
- Incentives to increase the number of dentists and dental hygienists, through National Health Service Corps and other loan repayment programs, and scholarship programs for dentist faculty.

“This bill has the potential to greatly improve oral health access, especially together with the Children's Dental Health Act introduced recently in the House,” said Burton Edelstein, DDS, MPH, Founding Director of the Children's Dental Health Project, a research and policy organization in Washington, DC. “It's exciting to see two major pieces of oral health access-related legislation introduced in one Congressional session,” he continued. “The Children's Dental Health Project focuses on four policy areas for improving oral health access: financing, workforce, safety net and health promotion. We are pleased to see this new piece of legislation addressing dental workforce issues.”

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*The Children's Dental Health Project of Washington DC is a research and policy organization assisting policymakers, healthcare providers, advocates and parents in improving oral health and increasing access to dental care. Children's Dental Health Project, 1990 M Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: (202) 833-8288,*

*Fax: (202) 318-0667. [www.cdhp.org](http://www.cdhp.org).*