

March __, 2024

The Honorable Jason Smith
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith, Chairwoman McMorris Rodgers and Ranking Members Neal and Pallone:

On behalf of the undersigned members of the Organized Dentistry Coalition and other oral health advocacy organizations, we are writing to express our support for H.R. 7814, led by Representatives Jeff Van Drew and Yvette Clarke. This bill would work to grow the dental workforce and address patient access by supporting the growth of dental faculty to train more dentists and dental hygienists. The legislation would allow full-time faculty members participating in the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Program (DFLRP) to exclude from income the amount of their loan forgiveness from their federal income taxes. We urge you to support this bill.

The Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Program was created to help accredited academic dental institutions recruit and retain qualified and diverse faculty in dental schools, residencies, and advanced education programs in general, pediatric, and public health dentistry. In order to build the dentist workforce, we must ensure there is a pipeline of faculty to support new dentists and hygienists. Recruiting and retaining dental faculty is a significant challenge, given the staggering level of student loan debt and income disparity so many dentists face.

Thank you in advance for your leadership in cultivating the next generation of dental faculty to train general, pediatric and public health dentists and hygienists. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. C. Scott Litch at the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (312-337-2169, slitch@aapd.org), Ms. Megan Mortimer at the American Dental Association (202-898-2402, mortimerm@ada.org), or Mr. Tim Leeth at the American Dental Education Association, (202-289-8172, leeth@adea.org).

Sincerely,