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September 27, 2007

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chair
Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley,

The Children's Dental Health Project commends your joint effort to reduce the number of uninsured children in this country through the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007. As a policy organization with the sole mission of improving children's access to oral health, we appreciate your efforts to stabilize the dental benefit, support early visits to the dentist, enhance the quality of dental care, and improve access to care.

Dental disease remains the single most common chronic disease among America's children and is on the increase in young children – now affecting fully 28% of all preschoolers. Tooth decay in this population has recently increased for the first time in 40 years creating a significant health threat to the next generation. Therefore, providing access to dental care through public private contracting, educating new parents about oral health, and establishing systems for monitoring the quality and performance of state dental benefits are all significant strides toward assuring the oral health for all children. Providing states the opportunity to address the prevention of disease, the development of the dental safety-net, and financing of dental care are all important areas that have been in need of attention to improve access and quality of dental care.

We appreciate that you considered a variety of creative approaches to ensuring essential, basic oral health services for targeted low-income children and chose to endorse and support stabilizing the dental benefit for all targeted children. Thank you for your commitment to the oral health of our nation's children. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Burton Edelstein, DDS, MPH
Chairman
Children's Dental Health Project

Give
Us A
Helping
Hand

