



Board of Supervisors

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April 12, 2017

The Honorable Ed Hernandez, OD
Chair, Senate Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: SB 508 (Roth): Medi-Cal: Dental Health
As Amended, April 6, 2017
Set for hearing, April 19, 2017 – Senate Health Committee
County of Riverside: SUPPORT – Per Board Action**

Dear Senator Hernandez:

On behalf of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, I write in support of SB 508 by Senator Roth. SB 508 would establish an opt-in Managed Care Dental Pilot Program for Medi-Cal beneficiaries in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

The pilot program established in SB 508 would provide an opportunity to improve dental care for adults enrolled in the Medi-Cal program and would allow for innovation at the local level.

The links between health outcomes and oral health are clear:

- Acute infections in mouth can spread to other organs;
- Severe gum infections are associated with: 1) increased risk for diabetes, 2) cardiovascular disease, 3) aspiration pneumonia in nursing home residents;
- Oral health during pregnancy is linked to birth outcomes, including low birthweight and premature births.

Intensive collaboration and innovation across health and dental sectors can improve overall health to the Medicaid population. Additionally, dental provider rates in the Inland Empire are well below the statewide average of 1,260 patients per dentist. The rate in Riverside is 2,070 patients per dentist, and the rate in San Bernardino is 1,540 patients per dentist. SB 508 offers an opportunity to provide comprehensive and integrated oral health in a diverse part of the state with acute dental needs. The measure will assist with patient outreach, education, dental and health treatment, and compliance with ongoing prevention and treatment plans.



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SB 508 would provide an important opportunity to test better integration of dental health for Medi-Cal beneficiaries, with the goal of improving health outcomes. It is for these reasons that Riverside County urges your support of SB 508. If you have any questions about the County's position, please do not hesitate to contact Deputy County Executive Officer, Brian Nestande at (951) 955-1110 or bnestande@rceo.org.

Sincerely,



John Tavaglione
Chairman, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Richard Roth, Member, California State Senate
Members, Senate Health Committee
Scott Bain, Consultant, Senate Health Committee
Joe Parra, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus