



Senate of Pennsylvania

TO: All Senators

MAY 22 2012

FROM: Senator Edwin B. Erickson *ee*

DATE: May 22, 2012

SUBJECT: Cosponsorship of Legislation – Donated Dental Services Program

In the near future I intend to introduce legislation to establish the Donated Dental Services Program (DDS). The DDS Program is a collaborative, direct way that the dental profession reaches out to individuals with special needs and limited financial means. Because of the extraordinary compassion of over 15,000 dentists and 3000 dental laboratories across the country, DDS tends to the essential and comprehensive dental care needs of our nation's most vulnerable people; disabled, elderly or medically-compromised individuals who cannot afford necessary treatment nor qualify for public aid. DDS patients have slipped through the cracks of Medicaid and Medicare programs with nowhere else to turn.

Pennsylvania used to provide \$150,000 in funding for two regional offices and coordinators who facilitated care between volunteer dentists and patients. This successful private-public partnership helped provide needed dental services to hundreds of patients. Since funding was cut in 2009, both regional offices have closed, the coordinators were laid off and the program is no longer accepting new applicants. About half the number of patients were treated by volunteer dentists and laboratories. For just \$150,000, Dental Lifeline Network, which runs the DDS Program, could rehire the two regional coordinators and reopen their offices to provide an estimated \$1.35 million in donated care to more than 450 Pennsylvanians. These two coordinators are needed to manage cases and assist both the patient and the dentist.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Linda Kauffman at 7-1350 or lkauffman@pasen.gov.