

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- We commend Chairman Bernie Sanders

and the members of the Senate Health, Education Labor and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging for their continuing efforts to break down the barriers that impede millions of Americans from achieving optimal oral health. We hope that this latest hearing is a jumping off point for Congressional action that leads to more coverage—and more care—for those who need it most.

This country is facing a dental health crisis—a gap between those with good health and those without. Its causes are varied and complex and it will only get worse without a comprehensive set of solutions. The good news is that increasing attention is being paid to dental health. But the proposed solutions have been too few and too narrow in scope.

Congress missed a terrific opportunity to address this in the Affordable Care Act by essentially leaving low-income adults behind. The failure of the ACA to address the critical dental needs of this population was one impetus for the ADA's [Action for Dental Health: Dentists Making a Difference](#), a major campaign to address a mounting dental health crisis in America. The campaign comprises multiple initiatives that fall into three general areas:

- Providing care now to people already suffering with untreated disease;
- Strengthening and expanding the public-private safety net to provide more care to more Americans; and
- Bringing dental health education and disease prevention into communities.

Healthy teeth and gums aren't a luxury—they're essential. We recognize that dentists alone cannot solve the nation's dental health crisis. Federal, state and local governments must be part of the solutions. We are committed to working with all stakeholders to put good dental health within the reach of all Americans.

About the American Dental Association The not-for-profit ADA is the nation's largest dental association, representing 157,000 dentist members. The premier source of oral health

information, the ADA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1859. The ADA's state-of-the-art research facilities develop and test dental products and materials that have advanced the practice of dentistry and made the patient experience more positive. The ADA Seal of Acceptance long has been a valuable and respected guide to consumer dental care products. The monthly

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. For more information on oral health, including prevention, care and treatment of dental disease, visit the ADA's consumer website

www.MouthHealthy.org

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