



## 2014 NFWL Annual Conference

### **Resolution: In Support of calling upon the United States Congress to provide full funding for the Alternative Oral Health Workforce Providers Demonstration Grant Program**

**WHEREAS**, the National Foundation of Women Legislators (NFWL) recognizes the importance of oral health to the overall health and well-being of children and adults;

**WHEREAS**, dental disease, which may affect the teeth, gums, or other tissues and parts of the mouth, is the most common chronic childhood disease in the United States and is five times more prevalent than asthma<sup>i</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Surgeon General's report, *Oral Health in America*, stated that although "major improvements have been seen nationally for most Americans, disparities exist in some population groups as classified by age, sex, income, race/ethnicity"<sup>ii</sup>;

**WHEREAS** more than 14 million children enrolled in Medicaid did not receive any dental service in 2011<sup>iii</sup>;

**WHEREAS** more than 100 million American adults and children do not have dental insurance<sup>iv</sup>;

**WHEREAS** in 2010, 2.1 million dental-related emergency room visits had cost estimates up to \$2.1 billion<sup>v</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, there are currently 4,800 dental health professional shortage areas based on a dentist to population ratio of 1:5,000<sup>vi</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, 7,100 additional dentists would be required in order to meet the needs of the underserved in the dental shortage areas<sup>vii</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, the National Dental Association has recommended considering workforce development as a determinant of access and increasing underrepresented minorities in oral health careers, including dental therapy<sup>viii</sup>;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Foundation of Women Legislators (NFWL) recognizes the need to address oral health access issues in underserved communities;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NFWL urges state and local governments to consider emerging workforce models, including dental therapy, that meet the standards outlined by the Advisory Panel Report and Recommendations of Community Catalyst and those outlined by the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, with scope of practice, supervision, and workforce regulations based on competence, education, training, and safety of services;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NFWL calls for, in accordance with recommendations of the National Dental Association, state laws that allow allied dental personnel to work in a variety of settings under evidence-supported supervision levels; and practice to the full extent of their education and training; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NFWL calls upon the United States Congress to provide full funding for the Alternative Oral Health Workforce Providers Demonstration Grant Program, which would provide grants to public universities, community colleges, public health departments and other entities to train and implement additional workforce providers that have been authorized under state law.

<sup>i</sup> Newacheck, P. W., Hughes, D. C., Hung, Y. Y., Wong, S., & Stoddard, J. J. (2000). The unmet health needs of America's children. *Pediatrics*, 105(4 Pt 2), 989-997.

<sup>ii</sup> "Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General (2000). USDHHS, USPHS, p. 35.

<sup>iii</sup> Issue Brief: "In Search of Dental Care (2013)," *The Pew Charitable Trusts*.

<sup>iv</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>v</sup> NHAMCS-National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, *USA Today*, February 2012.

<sup>vi</sup> Issue Brief: "In Search of Dental Care (2013)," *The Pew Charitable Trusts*.

<sup>vii</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>viii</sup> National Dental Association, "Position on Access to Care and Emerging Workforce Models," 2014.

The Power to Make a Difference

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