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Legislative Testimony
H.B. 6365 AAC The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2011,
And Making Appropriations Therefore
Appropriations Committee

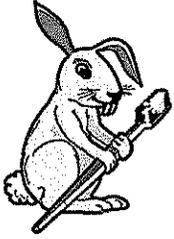
Good Afternoon. My name is Scott Bialik. I am a practicing Pediatric Dentist in Brookfield CT.

As I was reading through the Governors' proposed cuts, I noticed that one of these cuts was to eliminate Medicaid Dentistry for Adults in our State. Respectfully, I have to say that I feel this would be a huge injustice. For years the Connecticut Legislature has been saying that we have an access to care problem. The Dentists of this great state have stepped up to the plate to help solve this problem through various venues including the HUSKY program, the annual Give Kids A Smile Day, Mission of Mercy and countless un-reported pro-bono cases. However, if this proposed cut is enacted, not only would it be penny wise and pound foolish, it would just be sweeping this issue under the rug. I realize times are tough and cuts need to be made, but I feel that there must be better ways to address our current economic problems than by cutting a service that the lower income families of our state need, especially since right now this population is swelling due to no fault of their own.

Rather than just appeal to you through humanitarian points, I would also like to point out some well documented reasons as to why dental care is needed in this adult population.

- It is well documented that regular preventive dental treatment is much cheaper in the long run than through emergency care.
- Dental neglect can lead to serious life threatening conditions which can cost tens of thousands of dollars more than receiving dental care at the appropriate time to avoid this situation.
- Periodontal disease has been linked to heart disease.
- Dental disease in pregnant women can affect the viability of that pregnancy.
- Dental Infection can lead to prolonged hospital stays and treatment which would not bode well with keeping health care costs down.
- Dental pain & suffering has in the past and can in the future cause loss of work time, which would be counter productive in this economy.
- Many serious adult conditions present themselves in the oral cavity early on, prior to showing up systemically when it might be too late to treat, or much more expensive.

Finally, how can we as a society promote dental health to our children, if indeed we are not willing to provide it to the adults? What kind of message are we sending to our



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communities by sweeping a known problem under the rug and thereby neglecting basic health services to the indigent?

Respectfully Submitted,

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