

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 21, 2012

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius,

We are writing to request that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) clarify the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act rules in order to ensure that consumers are given equitable access to dental coverage both inside and outside the health insurance exchanges (exchanges) and that the current dental market outside of the exchanges is maintained.

It is important that stand-alone dental plans be allowed to provide the pediatric dental coverage component of the Essential Health Benefits (EHB) requirements outside of the exchanges in the individual and small group markets, as they can inside the exchanges. While stand-alone dental plans will qualify as meeting the EHB Package's dental component inside the exchanges, the same standard has not yet been made for plans operating outside of the exchanges.

Most Americans with commercial dental coverage are covered through a separate or stand-alone dental policy. If a clarification is not made and stand-alone dental plans are not allowed to provide the pediatric dental component of the EHB requirements outside the exchange, dental coverage in both the pediatric and adult populations will likely be disrupted and children may be separated from their parents' policies and risk having to switch dentists.

Without clarifying this issue, 43.7 million employees and dependents that now have separate dental policies through 1.7 million small businesses could have their current dental coverage disrupted.

We are asking HHS to address this gap between the treatment of dental coverage inside and outside the exchange to ensure the continuity of dental coverage and care for all Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of this very important issue.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman  
United States Senator



David Vitter  
United States Senator



Pat Toomey  
United States Senator



Roy Blunt  
United States Senator



John Boozman  
United States Senator