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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 25, 2012

Mark B. Childress
Deputy Chief of Staff
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

Jeanne M. Lambrew, PhD
Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy
Domestic Policy Council
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mr. Childress and Dr. Lambrew:

As the Administration implements the Affordable Care Act (ACA), I urge you to ensure that all Americans have access to competitive and robust dental plans.

The ACA greatly expanded children's dental health coverage by requiring oral health services for children is included in the essential health benefits package (EHPB). I applaud the work that has been done to provide families the ability to keep pediatric dental plans for their children if they enter into the Insurance Exchanges in 2014. However, I remain concerned that rules regarding stand-alone pediatric dental plans outside of the Exchanges need further clarification. While stand-alone dental plans will qualify as meeting the EHPB's dental component inside the Exchanges, the same standard has not yet been made for plans operating outside of the Exchanges.

Currently, 97 percent of Americans with dental coverage have it through stand-alone plans. Regardless of whether consumers purchase medical insurance inside or outside of the Exchanges, they should be afforded the opportunity to purchase a stand-alone dental plan and still meet the EHPB requirement.

As the Administration finalizes the EHPB rule, we urge you to include a clarification for stand-alone dental plans operating outside of the Exchanges so they are deemed to satisfy the requirements of EHPB together with a qualified health plan.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

CC: Secretary Sebelius, Department of Health and Human Services