

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY OF 2024, AS "NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senator Alana DiMario

Date Introduced: February 05, 2024

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Children's Dental Health Month is a month-long national health observance
2 that provides an opportunity to highlight a child's dental health as being a critical component of
3 overall well-being and essential to a child's quality of life. A healthy mouth is meant to last a
4 lifetime and contributes to an individual's self-esteem; and

5 WHEREAS, Good dental care begins as early as age one with good habits that are
6 reinforced through examples set by parents, caregivers, and older siblings in collaboration with
7 dental healthcare providers; and

8 WHEREAS, Childhood cavities remain the most prevalent, chronic, and curable disease
9 of childhood but some 100 million Americans fail to visit their dental office for routine
10 preventive care; and

11 WHEREAS, Rhode Island's poor and minority children are the most vulnerable and are
12 disproportionately and negatively affected by dental decay which remains the most prevalent
13 infectious disease of childhood. They are often left waiting months for necessary treatment or
14 surgical procedures; and

15 WHEREAS, Young children, between the ages of three and five, and those with special
16 needs are also at additional risk as they often cannot tolerate or understand the necessary dental
17 treatments which can lead to chronic dental pain and produces a negative impact on the child's
18 mental and overall physical health; and

19 WHEREAS, This year, the slogan is "Fluoride in the water prevents cavities! Get it from

1 the tap!” Fluoride in water is the most efficient way to prevent common childhood diseases such
2 as tooth decay. Untreated cavities can cause pain, infection, problems with eating, and speaking
3 difficulties; and

4 WHEREAS, In addition, sealants, a protective thin coating placed on the chewing surface
5 of a child’s adult molar, as soon as the tooth appears in the mouth, have been shown to be a cost-
6 effective method of preventing cavities beginning in early childhood and can be applied in the
7 dental office, school-based sealant programs, mobile dental clinics, and community settings; and

8 WHEREAS, Communities should all be working collectively to support dental health
9 professionals, school-based dental health programs, and community organizations in advocating
10 for increased overall access to preventive programs that support sealant programs which in the
11 long-term reduces the future need for extensive and costly dental treatments; and

12 WHEREAS, Dental professionals, school administrators, state officials, and parents
13 should advocate for dental health educational and treatment programs for children and families;
14 now, therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby urges all citizens and
16 community organizations to observe February as National Children’s Dental Health Month; and
17 be it further

18 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby proclaims February of 2024, to be "Children’s
19 Dental Health Month" in the State of Rhode Island; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
21 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Ms. Marie Jones-Bridges, PHDH, BS, United
22 Healthcare, Rhode Island Community Based Coordinator, Specialty Benefits, RIte Smiles Dental.

=====
LC004698
=====