

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

HOUSE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY OF 2023, TO BE "CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH"
IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Kislak, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, McGaw,
Kennedy, Tanzi, Fenton-Fung, Ajello, and Cortvriend

Date Introduced: February 14, 2023

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The recognition of February as Children's Dental Health Month provides an
2 opportunity to highlight a child's dental health as being a critical component of overall well-being
3 and essential to a child's quality of life. A healthy mouth is meant to last a lifetime and
4 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, Sealants, a protective thin coating placed on the chewing surface of a child's
12 adult molar, as soon as the tooth appears in the mouth, have been shown to be a cost effective
13 method of preventing cavities beginning in early childhood. Untreated cavities can cause pain,
14 infection, problems with eating, and speaking difficulties; and

15 WHEREAS, Sixty percent of children aged six through eleven do not receive sealants
16 and children from low-income families are 20 percent less likely to get sealants. Dental sealants,
17 once applied, protect against 80 percent of cavities for two years and continue to protect against
18 50 percent of cavities for up to four years; and

19 WHEREAS, Dentists, dental hygienists and other qualified dental professionals can apply

1 sealants in the dental office, school-based sealant programs, mobile dental clinics, and
2 community settings; and

3 WHEREAS, We should all be working collectively to support the dental community,
4 school-based dental health programs, and community organizations in advocating for increased
5 overall access to preventive programs that support sealant programs which in the long-term
6 reduces the future need for extensive and costly dental treatments; and

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

10 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
11 urges all citizens and community organizations to observe February as National Children's Dental
12 Health Month; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That this House hereby proclaims February of 2023, to be "Children's
14 Dental Health Month" in the State of Rhode Island; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
16 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Ms. Marie Jones-Bridges, PHDH, BS, United
17 Healthcare, Rhode Island Community Based Coordinator, Specialty Benefits, Rhode Island Rite
18 Smile Dental.

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