

**2025 -- H 5540**

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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025**

**HOUSE RESOLUTION**

**PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY OF 2025 TO BE "CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH"  
IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Introduced By: Representatives Kislak, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Kennedy,  
Ajello, Fogarty, Ackerman, Tanzi, and Bennett

Date Introduced: February 25, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1           WHEREAS, Since 1949, the American Dental Association has championed February as  
2 National Children's Dental Health Month. Bringing focus to the importance of good oral health  
3 care habits, making better nutritional food choices, and encouraging children to access dental  
4 health care has been a constant theme over the decades; and

5           WHEREAS, This year's theme of "Brushing Fights Cavities" is critical to the  
6 overwhelming well-being of a healthy mouth and a major contributor to achieving and  
7 maintaining an individual's overall well-being; and

8           WHEREAS, Childhood cavities remains the most preventable chronic oral disease that  
9 affects all children regardless of social economics, race, ethnicity, gender, or age, and continues  
10 to affect more than 74% of the children in the United States who have not seen a dentist by age  
11 one; and

12           WHEREAS, Barriers, unfortunately, are still prevalent in today's society, which limit  
13 oral health equity even in basic preventive care, such as routine cleanings, fluoride treatments,  
14 sealants, and restorative care. It should not be the "norm" to make a child wait 4-6 months who  
15 needs critical dental care all the while with exacerbating pain, limiting their ability to sleep, eat,  
16 attend school, and perform normal life functions; and

17           WHEREAS, In 2015, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed the Public Health  
18 Dental Hygienist bill. Subsequently, in 2022, 2023, and 2024, legislation was passed to increase  
19 facility reimbursements for surgical ambulatory clinics and increase reimbursement to providers –

1 and while these are small improvements - we need to do more; and

2 WHEREAS, It is imperative that Rhode Island continues to rapidly expand access to  
3 dental care by replicating alternative models that have proven successful in other states. This  
4 expansion can only happen through collaborative efforts between the State, community  
5 stakeholders, dental professionals, and other interested parties; and

6 WHEREAS, Oral health education should be standard in every educational environment.  
7 Through education, an understanding of basic care will encourage and lead to daily quality oral  
8 health habits for overall better health; now, therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
10 proclaims the month of February of 2025 to be “Children’s Dental Health Month” in the State of  
11 Rhode Island. We furthermore heartily support the American Dental Association’s 2025 theme of  
12 “Brushing Fights Cavities”; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
14 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Aaron C. Guckian, MBA, MA, Executive  
15 Director, Rhode Island Dental Association.

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