



Permanente Dental Associates

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May 8, 2017

Rep. Merwyn R. Greenlick, Chair
Oregon House Health Care Committee

RE: Permanente Dental Associates Support for SB 786

Dear Chair Greenlick and members of the House Health Care Committee,

I am writing to voice my very strong support for Senate Bill 786, which will permit Oregon dental care providers to reach underserved populations through telehealth innovations.

Since 1974 Permanente Dental Associates, PC ("PDA") has been giving our Pacific Northwest neighbors something to smile about with dental care that connects seamlessly to their overall health and wellness plans. PDA operates 17 dental offices in Oregon, and in 2016 we provided over \$100 Million in high-quality dental care to over 150,000 Oregonians.

Many Oregonians, however, face serious obstacles in obtaining dental services, whether from physical conditions or economic and geographic barriers that make it difficult if not impossible to make it to a dentist's office. Those who are unable to receive treatment in the traditional dental care system will face significantly worse oral health outcomes than people who have access to regular dental care. Research shows that poor oral health outcomes will feed negatively back into many of those barriers – poverty, mental health, missed school and work days – that prevented them from seeking dental care in the first place.

Telehealth in dentistry will permit new and innovative care models – from remote post-operative consults to the "virtual dental home" – to deliver oral health care in the locations where people live, work, learn and receive social services. SB 786 creates flexibility for dental professionals to explore new technologies as they become available, so that health education, disease risk assessment, preventive procedures and a host of other services can be delivered remotely. We urge the House Health Care Committee to vote yes on SB 786.

Thank you for your consideration.

John J. Snyder, DMD

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