



March 9th, 2026

The Honorable Mia Bonta, Chair  
Assembly Health Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 390  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1629 (HANEY): DENTAL COVERAGE – SPONSOR**

Dear Chair Bonta:

The California Dental Association, representing 27,000 member dentists throughout the state, is proud to sponsor Assemblymember Matt Haney's AB 1629. This important legislation aims to hold commercial dental plans accountable and addresses several significant challenges that patients face when trying to utilize commercial dental insurance.

Californians are increasingly finding it difficult to locate in-network dentists. This challenge is not due to a shortage of dentists but rather a result of dental plans failing to offer adequate networks for consumers. Current California law mandates that the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) and the California Department of Insurance (CDI) assess the network adequacy of commercial dental plans to ensure they have enough providers to meet the needs of their enrollees.

Due to limited in-network options, many patients are forced to seek care from out-of-network providers. A common frustration is that some dental plans refuse to honor a patient's Assignment of Benefits (AOB). AOB allows patients to direct their dental benefits to their out-of-network dentist, enabling the dentist to handle payment directly. While most medical insurance plans honor AOB requests, some dental plans do not, often requiring patients to pay for care upfront, leaving them with significant out-of-pocket costs. Patients should not be penalized for choosing to see an out-of-network dentist, especially when their plan fails to provide an adequate network.

Regulators need a full and comprehensive view of all dental plan enrollees using a provider network to determine whether the plan is effectively meeting the needs of policyholders. Due to these "blind spots," the state cannot fully evaluate whether dental plans offer enough in-network dentists and specialists to deliver the promised care.

AB 1629 is a reintroduction of last year's AB 371, which Assembly Health passed unanimously. This legislation will increase access and transparency by improving state oversight of dental plans' network adequacy and requiring dental plans to honor AOB requests from enrollees.

These improvements will ensure that patients receive better value and access to care from their dental coverage. **CDA is proud to sponsor AB 1629 (Haney) and respectfully requests your AYE vote in the Assembly Health Committee.** If you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please contact me at (916) 554-5968 or [eric.dowdy@cda.org](mailto:eric.dowdy@cda.org).

Sincerely,



Eric Dowdy  
Sr Legislative Advocate

cc: Members, Assembly Health Committee  
Assemblymember Matt Haney