



April 15, 2025

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

**RE: AB 350 (Bonta): Health Care Coverage: Fluoride Treatment – SUPPORT/
CO-SPONSOR**

Dear Chair Bonta:

California Dental Association, representing 27,000 member dentists throughout the state, is proud to co-sponsor AB 350, which expands the coverage of topical fluoride varnish in primary care and public health settings for Medi-Cal and commercial health plans.

Cavities are the most common chronic, yet largely preventable condition, experienced by children. Untreated cavities can cause pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing and learning. Research shows that children with poor oral health status were nearly three times more likely than other students to miss school because of dental pain and were more likely to perform poorly in school. Further, the 2018-19 California Smile Survey found that 61% of third grade children in California have had tooth decay.

Fluoride is a mineral proven to repair and prevent damage to teeth. Unfortunately, in California, less than half of children in the Medi-Cal program have annual dental visits where topical fluoride varnish could be applied. Primary care and public health settings such as schools offer additional access points for the application of fluoride varnish for children enrolled in Medi-Cal.

Further, we are concerned about recent statements from the federal administration that threaten community water fluoridation (CWF), which the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has previously named as one of the 10 greatest public health interventions in the 20th century because of the dramatic decline in cavities since CWF started in 1945.

AB 350 would expand coverage and access to fluoride varnish by requiring Medi-Cal and commercial plans to cover fluoride varnish in primary care settings for children under 21 years of age as well as requiring the Department of Health Care Services to create a Medi-Cal policy governing fluoride varnish application and reimbursement for personnel

working for or under contract with Medi-Cal enrolled providers. Allowing more children to benefit from topical fluoride varnish application could lead to overall improved oral health outcomes for a higher number of children and youth and keep them in school ready to learn.

For these reasons, **CDA is proud to co-sponsor AB 350 (Bonta) and respectfully requests your AYE vote in the Assembly Health Committee.** Thank you for your leadership in promoting overall health to children throughout California. If you have any questions or concerns regarding our position, please contact me at eric.dowdy@cda.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Dowdy". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Eric Dowdy
Sr Legislative Advocate

cc: Members and staff, Assembly Health Committee
Assemblymember Mia Bonta