



Connecticut State Dental Association

835 West Queen Street
Southington, CT 06489

860.378.1800/phone
860.378.1807/fax

CSDA.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009**

**CONTACT: Kristy-Lee Downer
860-378-1800**

STATEMENT FROM CT STATE DENTAL ASSOCIATION ON THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

The following is a statement from Dr. Jonathan Knapp, DMD, President of the Connecticut State Dental Association, on the impact that Governor Rell's proposed budget will have on dental health care for thousands of Connecticut's poorest residents:

“While we understand the tough choices that the Governor had to make in her budget, we believe it is penny-wise and pound-foolish to eliminate dental coverage for adults on Medicaid and SAGA except in emergency situations. Preventive care and regular check ups are far less costly, both in terms of overall health and real dollars, than emergency dental services, which can run into the thousands of dollars. The message in this budget seems to be that for the sake of saving a few dollars now, we are willing to spend exponentially more when these individuals end up in our emergency care system. That's not a prudent way for families to manage their own budgets – save some money now, but pay even more later – nor is it a prudent way for the State to balance its budget.

We are also deeply concerned that this proposal will eliminate all but emergency dental services for pregnant women over the age of 21 on Medicaid and SAGA. Pregnant women with periodontal disease are at a three-to-five times greater risk for pre-term birth. In 2000, preterm birth/low birth weight was the leading cause of neonatal mortality in the United States. Since early detection and prevention are the keys to good oral health, and since pregnant women are at a greater risk for dental problems during the course of their pregnancy, it is critical that pregnant women get the preventive dental care they and their babies need – erecting barriers to dental care access for pregnant women places them and, more importantly, their unborn children at great risk.”

*****END*****

The Connecticut State Dental Association (CSDA) has 2,700 members including dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants. As the trusted leader and voice for oral health care in CT, the CSDA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1864. For more information about the CSDA, visit the Association's Web site at www.csdacom.com.