

Testimony in support of S2588 and H7756
Bernard J. Beaudreau, Executive Director
April 12, 2022



**Senior Agenda
Coalition of RI**

70 Bath Street
Providence, RI 02908

Re: In Support of Senate Bill 2588 and House Bill 7756 - Relating to Health and Safety -- Assisted Living Residence Licensing Act

Dear Chair Pearson, Chair Abney and Members of the Finance Committees,

Subject: Support S-2588 and H-7756 Relating to Human Services-Medical Assistance Long Term Care Service and Finance Reform

Please accept this letter in support of the submitted bill S-2588 and H-7756 Relating to Human Services-Medical Assistance Long Term Care Service and Finance Reform. **These bills will provide for patient site encounter mobile dentistry visits be increased to \$180 per visit and will expand the availability of this service to additional community-based settings including group homes, assisted living facilities, adult day health and intellectual and developmental disabilities day programs.** In doing so, the bills provide for increased access to multiple populations that have been evidenced to have difficulty accessing basic dental services in RI.

The mobile dentistry encounter site visit reimbursement was first established in 2008. Although this provided for some improved access for individuals living in nursing homes, it failed to provide for the population living in, or attending, long term care community-based settings. Additionally, the reimbursement amount for this service has not been increased since its initial introduction and does not cover the cost of delivering this critical care.

The importance of accessing quality basic oral healthcare is paramount. The health of the teeth and mouth is central to a person's overall health and well-being and maintaining good oral health is evidenced to result in an overall healthcare cost savings. Poor oral healthcare results in a higher incidence of, pneumonia, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, bone loss and cancer; all situations increasing the frequency of accessing medical care resulting in higher costs.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (401) 440-4165 or email me a bernie.beaudreau@senioragendri.org. I appreciate the opportunity to provide this input. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.