



NH SENATE PRESS RELEASE

June 16, 2020

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Senator Rosenwald Champions Dental Benefits for Medicaid Enrollees; Bill Passes the Senate with Bipartisan Support

CONCORD - Today, the Senate passed HB 250, establishing a dental benefit under the state Medicaid program, in a vote of 19-5. The bill mirrors the language of SB 754 which unanimously passed through the Senate earlier this session. HB 250 next goes to the House of Representatives for a concurrence vote, which requires a simple majority.

After the vote, Senator Cindy Rosenwald (D-Nashua) issued the following statement:

“Dental coverage for the over 90,000 adults currently enrolled in traditional and expanded Medicaid is more than a public health measure, it is a long term cost saver. Delayed treatment or a lack of preventative dental care can lead to long term negative health effects and increased expenses for treating acute and chronic disease. Annually, New Hampshire spends around \$1.5 million for dental related emergency room visits alone. In addition to saving the state money in emergency care and other health care costs, proper dental hygiene can make the difference in a person’s employment. Working age adults who receive dental care will be less likely to have poor dental presentation which has been proven to deter employers. By expanding dental benefits, we increase employability and financial security for Granite Staters covered under Medicaid.

This measure is long overdue. The start up costs have been accounted for in the state budget and the Senate already unanimously passed this measure earlier this session. I thank my colleagues for their continued work on this important issue.”

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