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November 17, 2020

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin Cramer
United States Senate
400 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Manchin and Cramer,

On behalf of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) and its 40,000 members, I write to express our support for the *Dental and Optometric (DOC) Access Act (S.4894)*, legislation that prohibits dental benefits carriers from setting fees that contracted dentists may charge patients for services not covered under their dental plan.

Like you, the AGD is greatly concerned about patients' access to quality oral health care services, as well as the impact poor oral health may have on other chronic health ailments. S.4894 will provide greater access to high-quality care by helping to curb anti-patient and anti-competitive practices of dental insurance plans, as they often use fee setting to shift costs to patients who are paying for their coverage out of their own pockets or are seeing a dentist out of network.

While 40 states have established laws preventing these practices that interfere in the doctor-patient relationship, many plans are regulated federally and can circumvent these protections. We believe the *DOC Access Act* will help ensure equity in the relationship between dentists, who are often small business owners, and large dental insurance companies. Limiting contract length duration mandates and empowering providers to take plans that violate the provisions of S.4894 directly to court are welcome changes that will help our members provide their patients with the best treatment and services.

The AGD stands ready to work with you and your staff to generate support for this important legislation and on future shared interests. Please do not hesitate to contact Daniel J. Buksa, JD, Associate Executive Director, Public Affairs, by phone at (312) 440-4328 or via email at Daniel.buksa@agd.org to let us know how we may be of further assistance. Thank you again for sponsoring this critical legislation to help preserve the doctor-patient relationship and for your ongoing efforts regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Bruce Cassis, D.D.S., MAGD
President
Academy of General Dentistry

Myron (Mike) Bromberg, D.D.S.
Congressional Liaison
Academy of General Dentistry