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Rebecca Spitzgo
Associate Administrator
Bureau of Health Workforce
Health Resources and Services Administration
Department of Health and Human Services
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Dear Ms. Spitzgo:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), American Dental Education Association (ADEA), and American Dental Association (ADA), we are writing in regards to the FY 2015 Title VII primary care oral health grant cycles. As you know, the final FY 2015 appropriations legislation provided $33.928 million for section 748 programs, with not less than $10 million allocated to pediatric dentistry.

The AAPD, ADEA, and ADA are delighted that the Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW) has initiated new FY 2015 grant cycles for postdoctoral and predoctoral dental training. However, we remain concerned that given the significant high level of graduating dental student debt, it remains challenging for dental schools and residency training programs to recruit and retain full time faculty. Without adequate faculty, many of HRSA’s training goals via the postdoctoral and predoctoral grants will be difficult to achieve. Therefore, we recommend that the BHW also consider issuing a new FY 2015 grant cycle under section 748 authority for primary care dental faculty loan repayment. This would be an especially helpful approach if BHW determines after postdoctoral and predoctoral awards are made that not all of the $10 million allocated for pediatric dentistry has been expended.
We appreciate your consideration of our recommendation. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Scott Litch at AAPD (312-337-2169) regarding pediatric dentistry issues, Yvonne Knight at ADEA (202-513-1162) regarding dental school issues, and Tom Spangler at ADA (202-789-5179) regarding overall dental workforce issues.

Sincerely yours,

John S. Rutkauskas, DDS, MBA, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

Richard W. Valachovic, DMD, MPH
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