



2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP-UP

The Florida Dental Association (FDA) continues to lead in advocating for policies and programs that support the dental profession and oral health in our state.

Each year the FDA is ready and willing to take on the challenges to help members succeed. During the 2024 Florida Legislative Session, the FDA pursued key dental policy initiatives that can take years to accomplish. But through the hard work of our bill sponsors, FDA leadership, and members like you, we secured key legislative victories, including:

- Addressing key challenges with dental plans
- Safeguarding patients
- Promoting oral health in underserved communities
- Protecting the standard of dental care in Florida

Thank you for your membership! These victories would not be possible without your support and commitment to organized dentistry.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Beatriz E. Terry'.

BEATRIZ E. TERRY, DDS, MS
FDA President

DENTAL INSURANCE REFORMS TO BENEFIT DENTISTS & PATIENTS

The FDA championed the passage of SB 892/HB 1219 (Sen. Harrell/Rep. Black) to address key issues with dental plans that have created challenges for Florida dental offices. Currently, dental plans often default to automatically provide contracted dental offices with payment via a virtual credit card, which charges a 3-5% service fee on each payment transaction. This legislation will protect dentists from these predatory virtual credit card payment processes by ensuring that the virtual credit card process is an opt-in option for dental offices. This legislation will also ensure that dental plans cover prior authorized services and dentists receive full payment for services provided.

INCREASING ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE

The FDA supported key components of the Live Healthy Act (SB 7016) that will promote oral health for our underserved communities. This includes expansion of the dental student loan repayment program and funding to \$8 million, training opportunities for dental students in federally qualified health centers, and a much-needed \$35 million fee increase for dental services in Florida's Medicaid program, which hasn't had a funding increase since 2011.

VETERANS DENTAL CARE GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING

Following the passage of 2023 legislation to create a veterans dental care grant program in Florida, the FDA secured \$1 million in funding to implement this program. Funding this program will help charitable organizations and clinics across the state provide critical oral health care services and treatment to veterans at no cost.



FLORIDA MISSION OF MERCY FUNDING

The FDA secured \$250,000 in funding for the 2025 Florida Mission of Mercy program to be held in Volusia County. This annual two-day dental clinic is hosted by the FDA Foundation to help thousands of Floridians get critical dental care and receive relief from dental pain.

INCREASING DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER DENTISTRY PROTECTIONS

Recognizing the growing use of direct-to-consumer dental products, the FDA supported the passage of HB 855/SB 302 (Rep. McClure/Sen. Boyd) to increase patient protections for direct-to-consumer dentistry. This legislation takes important steps to ensure patient protections and accountability, including requiring a dentist of record and that dentist's contact information for patients using these products.

DEFEAT OF DENTAL THERAPY LEGISLATION

Legislation was filed this year to authorize dental therapists to practice in Florida. Unlike the extensive training required to practice as a dentist, dental therapists are educated for at least three years out of high school and would be authorized to perform surgery or major irreversible procedures like extractions, partial root canals, and administer local anesthesia. The FDA opposes this legislation and was able to defeat it during session.



2025 IMPORTANT DATES

- **2025 Florida Legislative Session:**
March 4 – May 2, 2025
- **2025 Dentists' Day on the Hill:**
Save-the-date (March 25, 2025)



GOVERNMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE

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- Dr. Gerald Bird, Immediate Past President
- Dr. Bethany Douglas, NEDDA member
- Dr. Reese Harrison, NWDDA member
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