

Dear Denise ,

Could you please share this message with members of the Government Operations committee.

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Project of Vermont Legal Aid supports S.20 because we believe it will increase long term care residents' access to dental services and thus improve their overall health and quality of life.

A recent study shows that a significant number of nursing home residents in Vermont have poor oral health. Between July 2013 and January 2014, the Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Department of Health surveyed 342 residents in 20% of Vermont's nursing homes. (A summary of the study results is on the reverse side.)

The study found that among all residents surveyed:

- **41.9% needed dental care**
- **8.1% needed urgent care (within 48 hours)**
- **33.8% needed care (within several weeks)**

Among those with residents with teeth, the study found that:

- **48.3% had untreated teeth decay**
- **80% had severe gum inflammation**
- **70% had substantial oral debris in their mouths**
- **57% were in need of gum care.**

Federal and state law requires nursing homes to provide routine or emergency dental care or to obtain that care from an outside source. We believe that this bill will create a new, flexible, affordable option that will help facilities meet this requirement.

Sincerely,

Jackie Majoros
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