Date: January 30, 2013

To: Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

From: Kevin J. Robertson, CAE
Executive Director

RE: Kansas Dental Association/Kansas Dental Charitable Foundation

I am Kevin Robertson, executive director of the Kansas Dental Association (KDA) representing 1,250, or about 75% of the state's licensed dentists. Thanks for the opportunity to introduce myself and the KDA to you today.

The Kansas Dental Association is an IRS 501c6 association founded in 1871 with the mission of promoting oral health for the people of Kansas. The KDA is funded through the dues of individual private practice dentists, and the income generated from continuing education, meetings and other member activities that we coordinate/administer. We are very proud of our recently Kansas Initiative for New Dentists (KIND) partnership with the Delta Dental of Kansas Foundation which is providing scholarships and loan forgiveness grants to incentivize dentists to practice in rural areas. The KIND Scholarship program is meeting a need to increase the number of dentists in rural areas of Kansas and is in lieu of public scholarships and loan forgiveness provided to physicians and other health care professionals. KIND is a great example of how private partnership can work outside of state/public assistance.

In addition, the KDA's IRS 501c3 charitable foundation, the Kansas Dental Charitable Foundation (KDCF) provides scholarships, oral health grants and most visibly conducts the Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMOM) free dental clinic annually. In its 10th year, KMOM has provided 21,000 people with nearly $11 million in free dental care. The KDCF and the KMOM dental access project are funded with private contributions and grants from other foundations. Though we often receive much appreciated support from communities for facilities, security, traffic control, etc., the KDCF has never sought government assistance to coordinate a KMOM dental project.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this information about the KDA and KDCF today.