

Special Legislative Update March 2, 2011:

**H. 398** (VSDS.org) Vermont Representative Patsy French of Randolph has submitted legislation to authorize the **practice of dental therapy** in Vermont. We believe this is part of the efforts of the Kellogg Foundation Vermont Grant. This can be viewed at <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2012/bills/Intro/H-398.pdf>

**Status:** The Vermont legislature is on town meeting break this week and the bill will be introduced on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> and assigned to a legislative committee likely one of three House committees: Health Care; House Human Services; or House Government Operations.

Since we have almost reached the mid point in this year's legislative session we anticipate that this bill will become one of a long list of legislative issues and so may not be considered this session.

The VSDS is opposed to any action on this bill this year and we support a fact based approach to improving access to dental care and there are no facts to support this legislation in Vermont.

We are assessing the status of all legislative issues related to dentistry and will provide a more complete communication with all VSDS members next week on how we intend to proceed in the second half of the legislative session and the support we will be seeking from all VSDS Members.

Other issues:

**S.55 Non Covered Dental Services** - Peter Taylor will be testifying on Tuesday March 8, 2011 in favor of this legislation and ensuring that it applies to all dental benefit plans. This can be viewed at <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2012/bills/Intro/S-055.pdf>

**H.202 Vermont's Single Payer Legislation** - Peter Taylor will be testifying on this bill related to dental benefits also on Tuesday, March 8, 2011. In Vermont, Oral Health services are provided through geographically diverse primary dental care private practices and clinics. Private Dental Practices account for over 80% of the dental care provided to Vermonters on Medicaid, yet Medicaid accounts for only 11% of all dental expenditures. The VSDS believes that due to the uncertainty of financing the single payer concept and uniqueness of the dental care delivery system, that the legislature should focus available resources on improving access to oral health care for Vermonters in most financial need. This can be viewed at <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2012/bills/Intro/H-202.pdf> .

**2012 State Budget bill** (no number yet) **Dental Services Tax** - We want to thank VSDS members for their tremendous response in opposition to the proposed tax on dental services. Members are placing VSDS posters and

securing petition signatures and are meeting with their local legislators daily and reporting back to the society on the results of these meetings. Go to [www.vsds.org](http://www.vsds.org) for more information on this issue and click here to listen to Peter Taylor's testimony at a hearing of the Vermont House Ways and Means Committee on Friday, February 18, 2011. Peter's testimony, the committee's questions, his answers, and those of three VSDS members who attended the hearing are about 40 minutes in length. If each dentist can convince one legislator of our concerns, this tax will not happen.