

ANDREA VALDERRAMA  
REPRESENTATIVE  
HOUSE DISTRICT 47

900 COURT ST. NE, H-286  
SALEM OR 97301  
OFFICE: (503) 986-1447



February 20, 2025

Senate Committee on Healthcare  
Oregon Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 597: Oral Health Care Coordination in Schools

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the Senate Committee on Healthcare,

I am pleased to submit testimony in support of SB 597 - a bill to enhance Oral Health Care Coordination in Schools by establishing a grant program for OHA-certified school dental programs.

Almost half of Oregon's 1st through 3rd grade students have had cavities. Nationally, that number is 50% of children aged 6-8. This has led to cavities being the most common childhood chronic disease among children under 19 years old.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, unmet dental needs contribute to school absenteeism. Across the U.S., schoolchildren miss a combined 14 million days of school each year for treatable health conditions. Research shows that 2 million of that is due to dental pain, often due to untreated tooth decay.<sup>2</sup>

Dental sealants prevent up to 80% of cavities on the chewing surface of back teeth.<sup>3</sup> School dental sealant programs provide accessible, necessary healthcare to children at school, increasing health equity in dental care.

SB 597 establishes a grant program to provide financial support for dental sealant programs that promote oral health care coordination in schools. Further, this funding would support mobile dental services for participating students in David Douglas School District and Multnomah County school districts, ensuring children receive follow-up dental care.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Oregon Health Authority : School Dental Sealant Programs : School-based Oral Health Programs : State of Oregon](#)

<sup>2</sup> "The Relationship Between School Attendance and Health." 2016.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED592870.Pdf>. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED592870.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> [Oregon Health Authority : School Dental Sealant Programs : School-based Oral Health Programs : State of Oregon](#)

ANDREA VALDERRAMA  
REPRESENTATIVE  
HOUSE DISTRICT 47

900 COURT ST. NE, H-286  
SALEM OR 97301  
OFFICE: (503) 986-1447



OHA-certified dental sealant programs are in **every county in Oregon**. In outer east Portland, because of a school-based dental health clinic - **3,222** students are eligible for dental services, **382** sealants have been placed, and **558** student assessments are ongoing. These programs have tangible impacts and are improving the lives of our kids.

Please vote yes on SB 597 and pass it out of your committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script that appears to read "Andrea Valderrama".

Andrea Valderrama  
Oregon State Representative  
Outer East Portland – House District 47