



State of California

# LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

August 3, 2016

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*Executive Director*

The Honorable Evan Low  
Assemblymember, California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 2175  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 648 (LOW)**

Dear Assemblymember Low:

The Little Hoover Commission supports Assembly Bill 648, the bill that you have authored to establish the Virtual Dental Home Grant Program to expand the role of teledentistry in California.

In its 2016 report, *Fixing Denti-Cal*, the Commission found the state's Medicaid dental program to be lacking in multiple areas. One of them was teledentistry, a practical solution to better connect dentists and people in the neighborhoods where they live. The concept of a dental assistant with a laptop, digital camera and hand-held X-ray machine doing dental care under the supervision of a distant dentist who can review medical histories and X-rays from another computer and prescribe treatment should play a significant new role within the Denti-Cal system.

The Commission made several recommendations aimed at shifting the focus and culture of Denti-Cal. One recommendation calls for the Legislature to pass, and for the Governor to sign, AB 648. The bill would scale up the state's investment in teledentistry by allocating \$4 million for grants to organizations to develop teledentistry training modules and community-based collaboratives for dental service.

Because Assembly Bill 648 would expand the role and use of teledentistry, and shares the Commission's overall goal of making Denti-Cal more efficient, the Commission supports this measure.

If I or the Commission can provide any further assistance or expertise, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Carole D'Elia  
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission