

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 18, 2009

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell
Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: S.B. 64 [Dental Care for Pregnant Medicaid Beneficiaries]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed S.B. 64 which would expand Delaware's Public Assistance Code to provide urgent and preventive dental care for eligible Medicaid recipients who are pregnant or become pregnant while receiving assistance. As background, this bill is identical to H.B. 123 with H.A. No. 1 introduced during the 144th General Assembly. Council endorsed the predecessor bill. Attached please find material which provides the following information.

First, research suggests that periodontal disease may be a significant risk factor for pre-term, low birth weight babies. Second, pregnancy causes hormonal changes which increase the risk of developing gum disease. This is commonly referred to as "pregnancy gingivitis". Third, pregnant women are at risk of developing "pregnancy tumors" which arise from swollen gums.

SCPD endorses the proposed legislation given the benefits to pregnant women and developing fetuses.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position on the proposed legislation.

cc: The Honorable Jack A. Markell
Mr. Brian Hartman, Esq.
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council