
HOUSE BILL 2377

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Riccelli and Leavitt

Prefiled 01/10/20. Read first time 01/13/20. Referred to Committee on Health Care & Wellness.

1 AN ACT Relating to a state dental director; adding a new section
2 to chapter 43.70 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that oral health is
5 critical to an individual's overall health. Poor oral health often
6 results in pain, lost productivity, and reduced quality of life.
7 While Washington has a few programs devoted to oral health, access to
8 dental care is a challenge in many parts of Washington. In addition
9 to negative health consequences, poor oral health can have
10 significant associated financial costs to both the state and to
11 individual people. A state dental director is necessary to provide
12 state-level leadership and to coordinate efforts to address the broad
13 challenges of this important health issue.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 (1) The position of the state dental director is created within
17 the department. The dental director shall:

18 (a) Provide recommendations and guidance to the department, other
19 state agencies, individuals, and community providers on how to
20 prevent oral diseases and measures to take to improve, promote, and

1 protect the oral health of the residents of this state, with a focus
2 on reducing oral health disparities among underserved populations;
3 (b) Make recommendations and submit a report on the topics listed
4 in (a) of this subsection to the appropriate committees of the
5 legislature;
6 (c) Monitor, study, and appraise the oral health needs and
7 resources of residents of this state;
8 (d) Foster the development, expansion, and evaluation of oral
9 health services for residents of this state;
10 (e) Provide information concerning oral health to the dental and
11 health communities and the public;
12 (f) Develop policies to promote oral health in this state; and
13 (g) Develop programs, policies, and preventive measures to
14 positively impact oral health in this state.
15 (2) The department may enter into an interagency agreement with
16 the health care authority so that the dental director may consult and
17 coordinate with the health care authority to execute these duties as
18 necessary.

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