



### ***Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act (HR.1916, S.754 in the 117th Congress)***

Please cosponsor and support the bipartisan, bicameral *Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act (ELSA)*, which will be reintroduced by Senate leads, Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA), and House leads, Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (D-CA-18) and Congressman Drew Ferguson (R-GA-3), later this spring for the 118th Congress.

In the 117th Congress, this bill gained strong bipartisan support from 62 U.S. Senate cosponsors, 317 U.S. House cosponsors, and passed in the U.S. House of Representatives with a 310-110 vote. In preparation for ELSA's reintroduction in the 118th Congress, the bill leads and a broad coalition of ELSA supporting organizations have worked together to incorporate feedback and received several rounds of technical assistance to strengthen ELSA's language. ELSA is endorsed by a broad coalition of 70+ national health care professional and patient advocacy organizations (see back).

**Summary:** This bipartisan legislation would require a group health plan, and a health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage, to provide coverage for outpatient and inpatient items and services related to the diagnosis and treatment of a congenital anomaly or birth defect, including any medically necessary item or service to achieve normal body functioning and clarifies coverage for adjunctive dental, orthodontic, or prosthodontic support. *The bill explicitly excludes coverage of cosmetic surgeries.*

**Background:** About four percent of children in the U.S. are born with congenital anomalies that affect the way they look, develop, or function. Many born with congenital anomalies suffer from severe oral defects (such as cleft lip or palate, hypodontia, enamel hypoplasia), skeletal defects (such as craniosynostosis), vision defects (such as congenital cataracts or aphakia), hearing defects (such as microtia), or other loss of bodily functions. Individuals who do not receive timely, continuous care for their congenital anomalies face long-term physical and psychological injuries.

**Problem:** Most group and individual health plans include coverages for congenital anomalies, and all 50 states require health insurers to provide coverage for the treatment of congenital anomalies. Despite this, health plans systematically and routinely deny or delay claims and appeals for treatment of congenital anomalies by wrongfully categorizing certain treatments or body parts as cosmetic or not medically necessary. This is a common practice that leaves families with the burden of paying 100% of the cost for their child's medically necessary treatments, despite maintaining private health plans.

**Solution:** *The Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act* will close loopholes and ensure that group and individual health plans do not deny or delay medically necessary treatments of congenital anomalies, therefore improving the health of countless Americans.

**Contact Information:** To learn more or cosponsor, please contact **(Senate)** Sen. Baldwin's or Sen. Ernst's office or **(House)** Rep. Eshoo's or Rep. Ferguson's office.

**List of Professional and Patient Organizations Supporting ELSA**  
(Hyperlinks are active when viewed on computer)

[Academy of General Dentistry](#)

[American Academy of Dermatology Association](#)

[American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery](#)

[American Academy of Neurology](#)

[American Academy of Ophthalmology](#)

[American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology](#)

[American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

[American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry](#)

[American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research](#)

[American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons](#)

[American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus](#)

[American Association of Orthodontists](#)

[American Association of Women Dentists](#)

[American Behcet's Disease Association](#)

[American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association](#)

[American College of Prosthodontists](#)

[American College of Surgeons](#)

[American Dental Association](#)

[American Prosthodontic Society](#)

[American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association](#)

[American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists](#)

[American Society of Maxillofacial Surgeons](#)

[American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology](#)

[American Society of Plastic Surgeons](#)

[Association of Dental Support Organizations](#)

[Barth Syndrome Foundation](#)

[Born a Hero Research Foundation](#)

[Bridge the Gap – SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation](#)

[CCD Smiles](#)

[CDH International](#)

[Children's Hospital of Wisconsin](#)

[Colorado Rare](#)

[Costello Syndrome Family Network](#)

[Crane Dental Laboratory](#)

[Dermatology Nurses' Association](#)

[Derma Care Access Network](#)

[Ear Community, Inc.](#)

[EveryLife Foundation for Rare Diseases](#)

[Face-To-Face Colorado](#)

[FACES: The National Craniofacial Association](#)

[FD/MAS Alliance](#)

[Foundation for Ichthyosis and Related Skin Types, Inc. \(FIRST\)](#)

[Genetic Alliance](#)

[Georgia Prosthodontics](#)

[Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare](#)

[International Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Foundation](#)

[Lawrence C. Wright Craniofacial Center at John R. Oishei Children's Hospital](#)

[Lupus and Allied Diseases Association](#)

[Lymphedema Advocacy Group](#)

[M-CM Network](#)

[March of Dimes](#)

[Moebius Syndrome Foundation](#)

[myFace](#)

[National Association of Dental Laboratories](#)

[National Foundation for Ectodermal Dysplasias](#)

[National Organization for Rare Disorders](#)

[Noah's Hope – Hope4Bridget](#)

[Operation Smile](#)

[Ozark Prosthodontics](#)

[Pathways for Rare and Orphan Studies](#)

[Project Accessible Oral Health](#)

[Rare & Undiagnosed Network](#)

[rareLife solutions](#)

[Smile Train](#)

[Soft Bones: The US Hypophosphatasia Foundation](#)

[SunnyStrong](#)

[The APS Type 1 Foundation Inc.](#)

[The Marfan Foundation](#)

[The XLH Network, Inc.](#)

[The Sturge-Weber Foundation](#)

[Usher 1F Collaborative](#)

[Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners](#)

[Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association \(WSHA\)](#)