



We applaud the *Globe* for bringing to light the many obstacles faced by those in need trying to access oral health care in Massachusetts. (*Dental benefits widen, waiting lines grow*, August 7, 2008)

While it is true that a lack of dentists participating in the MassHealth program is one factor, there are many others, not the least of which is the system itself.

What business could possibly survive by spending an inordinate amount of time on administrative paperwork just to serve a certain segment of customers, and then lose money on each person they finally get to see? In the current system, that's exactly what dentists are being asked to do.

The Massachusetts Dental Society has made great progress in recruiting more of our members to participate in MassHealth. In fact, we've doubled the number in just the past 18 months. But we know that more needs to be done.

The problems in providing access to care are both chronic and systemic, dating back for decades. And the solutions won't be achieved overnight. By the dental profession and the state working together, we will be able to meet the growing demand of all those seeking high-quality oral health care.

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