

Bill To Provide Medicare Dental Coverage Introduced By Rep. Kelly, Rep. Horsford

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WASHINGTON, D.C.— Congresswoman Robin Kelly (IL-02), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, and Congressman Steven Horsford (NV-04), Congressional Black Caucus First Vice Chair, have re-introduced the *Medicare Dental Coverage Act* to provide dental coverage under Medicare Part B.

Currently, nearly 37 million Medicare beneficiaries lack access to dental care, putting them at risk for preventable oral health issues. Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by dental health inequities. According to [a Kaiser Family Foundation study](#), 71% of Black Medicare beneficiaries and 65% of Hispanic beneficiaries went without a dental visit in the past year, compared to 43% of white beneficiaries.

“Prolonged lack of access to dental care can lead to other serious medical conditions, and communities of color are disproportionately impacted. Bad oral health has been linked to heart disease, dementia, kidney disease and rheumatoid arthritis,” said Congresswoman Robin Kelly. “Rep. Horsford and I are introducing the Medicare Dental Coverage Act to ensure that every Medicare beneficiary can receive affordable dental care to keep themselves healthy and prevent unnecessary healthcare costs down the line.”

“Dental health is an essential part of overall health,” said Congressman Steven Horsford. “Without affordable dental coverage through Medicare, Nevada seniors are forced to choose between high out-of-pocket costs and a lower quality of life. As I work to lower the cost of health care and prescription drugs, I’m excited to introduce the Medicare Dental Coverage Act, which will expand access to dental coverage for more than 300,000 Nevada seniors.”

The *Medicare Dental Coverage Act of 2021* would:

- **Reimburse dentists and other licensed oral health professionals for preventive and screening services** such as oral exams, dental cleanings, dental x-rays, and fluoride treatments.
- **Cover basic and major dental treatments** as defined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Medicare beneficiaries would be eligible to receive two oral exams and two dental cleanings each year.
- **Cover a full or partial set of dentures once every five years**, or more frequently in cases where a dentist or qualified oral health professional determines the dentures do not fit the individual.

Full text of the bill is available [here](#).