

**WASHINGTON, DC** -Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) was recognized this week by the [Children's Dental Health Project \(CDHP\)](#)

for his leadership in working to improve children's access to oral health. The CDHP is a national non-profit organization that works to promote oral health care for children. Hoyer received the award Monday, after meeting with staff of the Greater Baden Health Services in Brandywine, Maryland to discuss their efforts to provide dental care to underserved populations. Rep. Hoyer's visit comes one year after the death of Deamonte Driver, a Prince George's boy who died after complications arising from an untreated toothache.

"It is difficult to think of a story more wrenching than that of Deamonte Driver, whose tragic death could have been easily prevented with the proper health care," **stated Rep. Hoyer**. "While Deamonte's story has been heard nationwide, there are still millions of uninsured poor children that remain at risk. Nothing should stand in the way of helping America's children get the health care they deserve and need to grow up strong and healthy."

**Founder and Chair of the Children's Dental Health Project Burton Edelstein, DDS, MPH**, commended Rep. Hoyer for his efforts in Congress to make dental care for children a priority, "The Children's Dental Health Project applauds the leadership of Congressman Hoyer to improve oral health and access to dental care for all children. This award is in recognition of his efforts to achieve better access to dental services during recent health care debates. We are confident that the Majority's Leader's interest and commitment will continue to keep this issue on the front burner and that the U.S. Congress will begin to tackle the solvable problem of dental access through cost-effective prevention efforts and adequate access to needed care."

Rep. Hoyer and Maryland's Congressional delegation led efforts last year to include a strengthened dental provision in legislation to provide health care for an additional 3.8 million uninsured children through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In January, the House fell short in overriding the President's second veto of the legislation. More than 100,000 children in Maryland currently receive care through CHIP, and the bipartisan plan vetoed by the President would have extended care this year to 20,000 additional eligible children.

"Despite the rigid opposition of the President and his allies, the fight to improve children's health care and dental services will go on," **stated Rep. Hoyer**. "While I am honored to receive this award, there is much to be done to ensure that Deamonte's case is not repeated. Children's health care is a priority, and I will continue to work in Congress to improve dental

care for our kids and extend coverage to more uninsured children.&quot;

Efforts by Maryland's delegation to improve children's access to dental care have been matched by efforts on the state level. At a Congressional hearing last month, the state earned praise from lawmakers for its action to improve dental care access. [Read the Washington Post story](#)

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