



**Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act
(HR.3277, S.1677 in the 119th Congress)**

Please support and become a cosponsor of the bipartisan, bicameral *Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act* (ELSA), led by Senate sponsors Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA) and House sponsors Congresswoman Kim Schrier (D-WA-8) and Congressman Neal Dunn (R-FL-2).

In the 117th Congress, ELSA gained strong bipartisan support from 62 U.S. Senate cosponsors and 317 U.S. House cosponsors, and it passed in the U.S. House of Representatives with a 310-110 vote. In preparation for ELSA's reintroduction in the 119th Congress, the bill sponsors and a broad coalition of patient-focused and professional medical organizations have worked together to strengthen ELSA's language by addressing feedback and incorporating recommendations from federal agencies through technical assistance. ELSA is endorsed by over 70 national healthcare professionals and patient advocacy organizations (see back).

Summary: ELSA 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, that primarily impacts the appearance or function of the eyes, ears, teeth, mouth, or jaw. Ensuring access to the medically necessary items and services necessary to functionally improve, repair, or restore bodily function or approximate a normal appearance due to a congenital anomaly, that primarily impacts the appearance or function of the eyes, ears, teeth, mouth, or jaw, such as cleft lip and palate, maxillofacial abnormalities, microtia, hypodontia, and congenital aphakia. Including any medically necessary item or service to achieve normal body functioning, and it clarifies that coverage includes adjunctive dental, orthodontic, and prosthodontic support. ELSA 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), 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 state that they 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 many congenital anomalies by wrongfully categorizing certain treatments or body parts as cosmetic or not medically necessary. This common practice 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, that primarily impacts the appearance or function of the eyes, ears, teeth, mouth, or jaw, therefore improving the health of countless Americans.

Contact Information: To learn more and cosponsor, please contact (Senate) Sen. Baldwin's or Sen. Ernst's office or (House) Rep. Schrier's or Rep. Dunn's office.

List of Professional and Patient Organizations Supporting ELSA

(Hyperlinks are active when viewed on computer)

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

[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 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, Inc.](#)

[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](#)

[Karen S McAndrew DMD, MS, PLC](#)

[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 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](#)

[Sujey Morgan, DDS - Boston Medical Center](#)

[SunnyStrong](#)

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

[The Marfan Foundation](#)

[The XLH Network, Inc.](#)

[The Sturge-Weber Foundation The TMJ Association, LTD.](#)

[Usher IF Collaborative](#)

[Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners](#)

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