**Sample Talking Points to Oppose Elimination of Local Dental Pilot Projects (Domain 4) of the DTI in State’s Request to Extend the Medi-Cal 1115 Waiver**

**\*\*It is STRONGLY suggested that relevant talking points are tailored to the perspective of your organization\*\***

* COVID-19 is hurting low-income communities of color disproportionately – magnifying racial disparities in our state’s health, social, and economic systems—including the racial inequities in dental care access. Communities of color are suffering from a lack of access to preventive care and are having to delay needed dental care due to COVID-19. Extending Domain 4 is directly correlated to our joint efforts to advance race equity in California.
* As COVID-19 continues to put our economy and health care system in crisis, we must ensure that we do not lose the gains that have been made through the Local Dental Pilot Projects, and allow for full demonstration of pilot services in order to truly test pilot strategies and identify best practices and lessons learned.

**[NOTE: Possible examples of the initial “gains”/successes to highlight could be:**

* + **Many children, who had never had dental care before, are getting the dental care they need because they are getting it in community settings.**
  + **Parents are receiving care coordination assistance to navigate the dental care delivery system and other systems that support their oral and overall health; many of these families previously didn’t know how to use the system, and thus, their children didn’t get needed care.**
  + **Parents are receiving high-quality, evidence-based oral health education**
  + **The LDPPPs are increasing the provider network.**

**Please add specific numbers and successes from your program and note that it is important to frame these successes as a starting point to make it clear that we need to continue to learn from these strategies, including forthcoming successes and lessons learned.]**

* 2020 was to be the first year for many that would show 100% implementation at full scale. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pilot programs as well as the state’s third-party evaluator did not get the opportunity to carry out 2020 activities as planned, therefore, LDPPs have not had the opportunity to demonstrate the value and impact of pilot program strategies.
* We are beginning to see results from the pilot programs that meet the goals of the Dental Transformation Initiative by providing much needed prevention-focused services within their communities. However, due to the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, these pilot programs have not had the time they needed to implement sustainability plans for the services being provided.
* California is leaving federal dollars on the table by ending the pilot before it had time to be fully implemented. These are dollars that are meant to both connect children in under-resourced communities with much needed preventive dental services and to build a sustainable system of community-based care, saving the State millions of dollars in the long run by avoiding costly preventable restorative dental care.