

Lawsuit over dental aides in Bush a case of pocketbooks over patients
Anchorage Daily News February 14, 2006

I am writing regarding the lawsuit by the American Dental Association against the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium ("Groups sue to stop rural dental aides," Feb. 1). This is a frivolous lawsuit. We Alaskans who live in the rural areas cannot afford this lawsuit. Many are unable to travel to places where there are full-time dentists and even if this is possible, the dentists are usually booked up for the entire month within the first couple of days of each month.

If the ADA really cared about us, they would drop the lawsuit and let the dental therapists go on and do the job that many dentists can't do due to time constraints and/or expenses for traveling (which occurs only once or twice a year). Who are the ADA really concerned about? Their pocketbooks or the patients? I think it's their pocketbooks. Dental therapists are sorely needed in rural Alaska and for the ADA to say the things they are saying is like a slap in our faces. Once again, money is the real issue instead of the people.

---- Jesse Gologergen

Savoonga