



**PROCLAMATION
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

WHEREAS, February is National Children’s Dental Health Month, a time to acknowledge and support efforts to improve the oral health of our most vulnerable Humboldt County residents – including children and pregnant people; and

WHEREAS, tooth decay is the most common disease found in children and is preventable when caregivers assist children with toothbrushing twice daily for two minutes using fluoridated toothpaste, flossing daily and establishing routine dental check-ups; and

WHEREAS, all teeth, including baby teeth, are important for eating, talking and smiling, and untreated tooth decay can have detrimental effects on a child's quality of life, performance in school and success in life; and

WHEREAS, one in four children in Humboldt County will start kindergarten with untreated dental decay with the greatest burden of oral health issues falling on historically marginalized communities of color and immigrant families; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative we support pregnant individuals in establishing good oral hygiene practices for themselves, before their babies are born, by securing a dental home, providing information on proper perinatal nutrition and providing education on how to care for the oral health of their children at all stages of development; and

WHEREAS, babies are not born with the germs that cause tooth decay as oral bacteria is contagious and can be passed from caregivers to children through the sharing of utensils, water bottles and toothbrushes; and

WHEREAS, Humboldt County supports systems change that create better access to fluoride varnish, dental sealants and fluoridated water regardless of income or location of residence within the county; and

WHEREAS, we commend the health care professionals in Humboldt County who provide dental care and care coordination to the most vulnerable while simultaneously acknowledging the dental workforce shortage that has created limited dental access for many residents in our county.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors hereby calls upon community members, governmental agencies, educators and medical and dental providers of Humboldt County to work together to address the oral health disparities in the county beginning with our most vulnerable residents, including children and pregnant people.

DATED: February 28, 2023

Steve Madrone, Chair