July 23, 2020

Senator Steve Glazer
Chair, Senate Business and Professions Committee
State Capitol - ███████████
Sacramento, CA ████████

Re: AB 1998 (Low) - Oppose Unless Amended

Dear Senator Glazer,

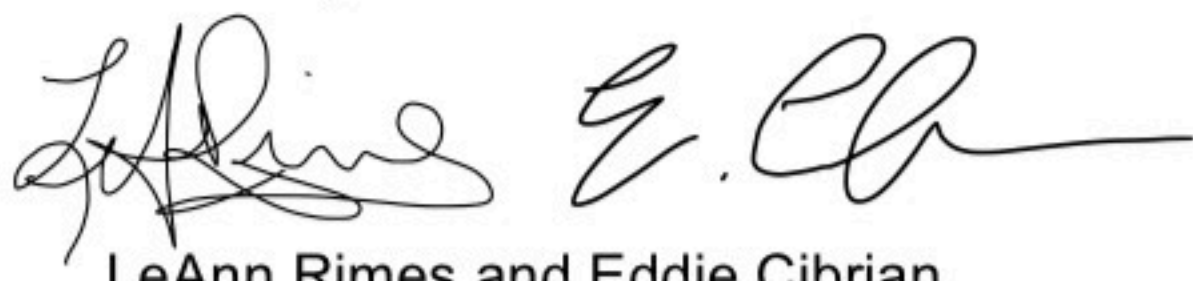I write to you regarding AB 1998. WE must oppose AB 1998 (Low) unless amended.

Low income families have been underserved in California for generations. AB 1998 ensures they will remain underserved. AB 1998 unfairly blocks access for low income families, particularly Black and Latino communities, to teledentistry platforms and affordable oral care including clear aligners. According to a recent UCLA study, Latinos are 80% less likely to find a dentist in their local area. Furthermore, a University of California study in 2019 found that access to specialty services and cost-prohibitive pricing continues to be a barrier to oral care for African American families, possibly the result of historical injustices and workforce limitations.

Although the bill was recently amended to remove the in-person visit requirement for access to clear aligners, AB 1998's requirement for an x-ray would still force Californians to go into dental offices and potentially be exposed to COVID-19 or forgo care altogether. Patients would also be exposed to harmful effects of oral X-rays which the American Dental Association and Food and Drug Administration have explicitly warned against.

As you know, Assembly Member Low authored AB (1519) last year to regulate clear aligners. As a result of AB 1519, all California patients who receive clear aligners have their entire course of treatment - from diagnosis to prognosis to prescription of aligners - designed and approved by a California licensed dentist or orthodontist, as regulated by the California Dental Board. To date, there have been NO adverse findings by the Dental Board against any dentist or orthodontist for improperly administering clear aligners. Thus, it seems that the provisions of AB 1998 are unnecessary.

For the reasons stated above, we respectfully request a "NO" vote on AB 1998.

Sincerely,

LeAnn Rimes and Eddie Cibrian