H-3759.1

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**HOUSE BILL 2377**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Riccelli and Leavitt

AN ACT Relating to a state dental director; adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that oral health is critical to an individual's overall health. Poor oral health often results in pain, lost productivity, and reduced quality of life. While Washington has a few programs devoted to oral health, access to dental care is a challenge in many parts of Washington. In addition to negative health consequences, poor oral health can have significant associated financial costs to both the state and to individual people. A state dental director is necessary to provide state-level leadership and to coordinate efforts to address the broad challenges of this important health issue.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.70 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The position of the state dental director is created within the department. The dental director shall:

(a) Provide recommendations and guidance to the department, other state agencies, individuals, and community providers on how to prevent oral diseases and measures to take to improve, promote, and protect the oral health of the residents of this state, with a focus on reducing oral health disparities among underserved populations;

(b) Make recommendations and submit a report on the topics listed in (a) of this subsection to the appropriate committees of the legislature;

(c) Monitor, study, and appraise the oral health needs and resources of residents of this state;

(d) Foster the development, expansion, and evaluation of oral health services for residents of this state;

(e) Provide information concerning oral health to the dental and health communities and the public;

(f) Develop policies to promote oral health in this state; and

(g) Develop programs, policies, and preventive measures to positively impact oral health in this state.

(2) The department may enter into an interagency agreement with the health care authority so that the dental director may consult and coordinate with the health care authority to execute these duties as necessary.

**--- END ---**