ORAL HEALTH PROGRESS: NATIONAL LEVEL

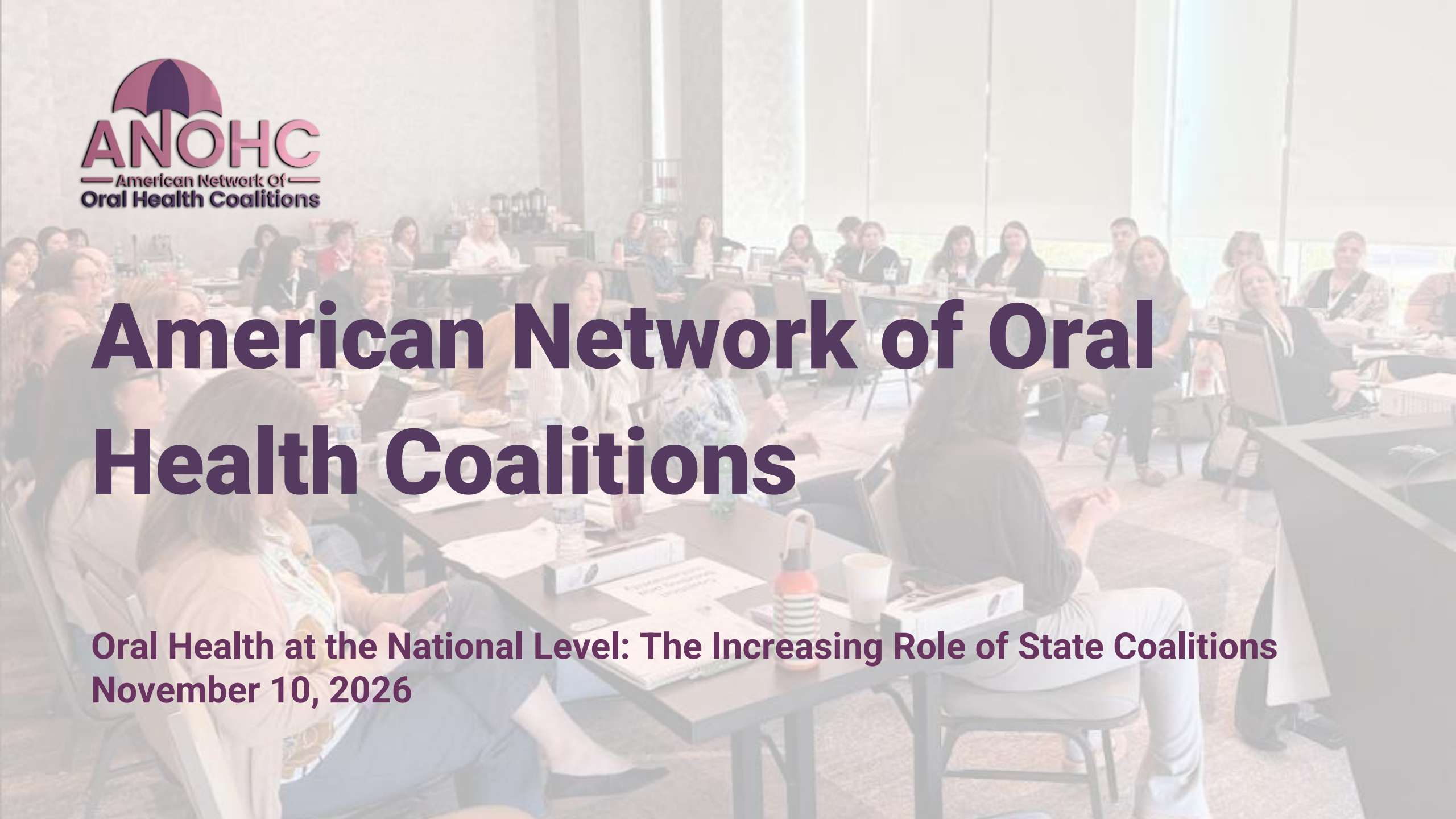
Oral Health at the National Level: The Increasing Role of State Coalitions

Tanya Dorf Brunner

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NEW YORK STATE ORAL HEALTH COALITION





American Network of Oral Health Coalitions

Oral Health at the National Level: The Increasing Role of State Coalitions

November 10, 2026

Disclosures

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- No relevant financial conflicts of interest to disclose.

American Network of Oral Health Coalitions

The mission of the American Network of Oral Health Coalitions (ANOHC) is to improve oral health by supporting strong, broad-based coalitions that leverage sound health care system change.

- Founded in 2010
- Incorporated in 2016
- State Oral Health Coalitions Initiative, 2026

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American Network Of
Oral Health Coalitions

The national home for *oral health* coalitions

ANOHC connects state and territorial oral health coalitions working to advance policy, expand access to care, and strengthen oral health across the country.

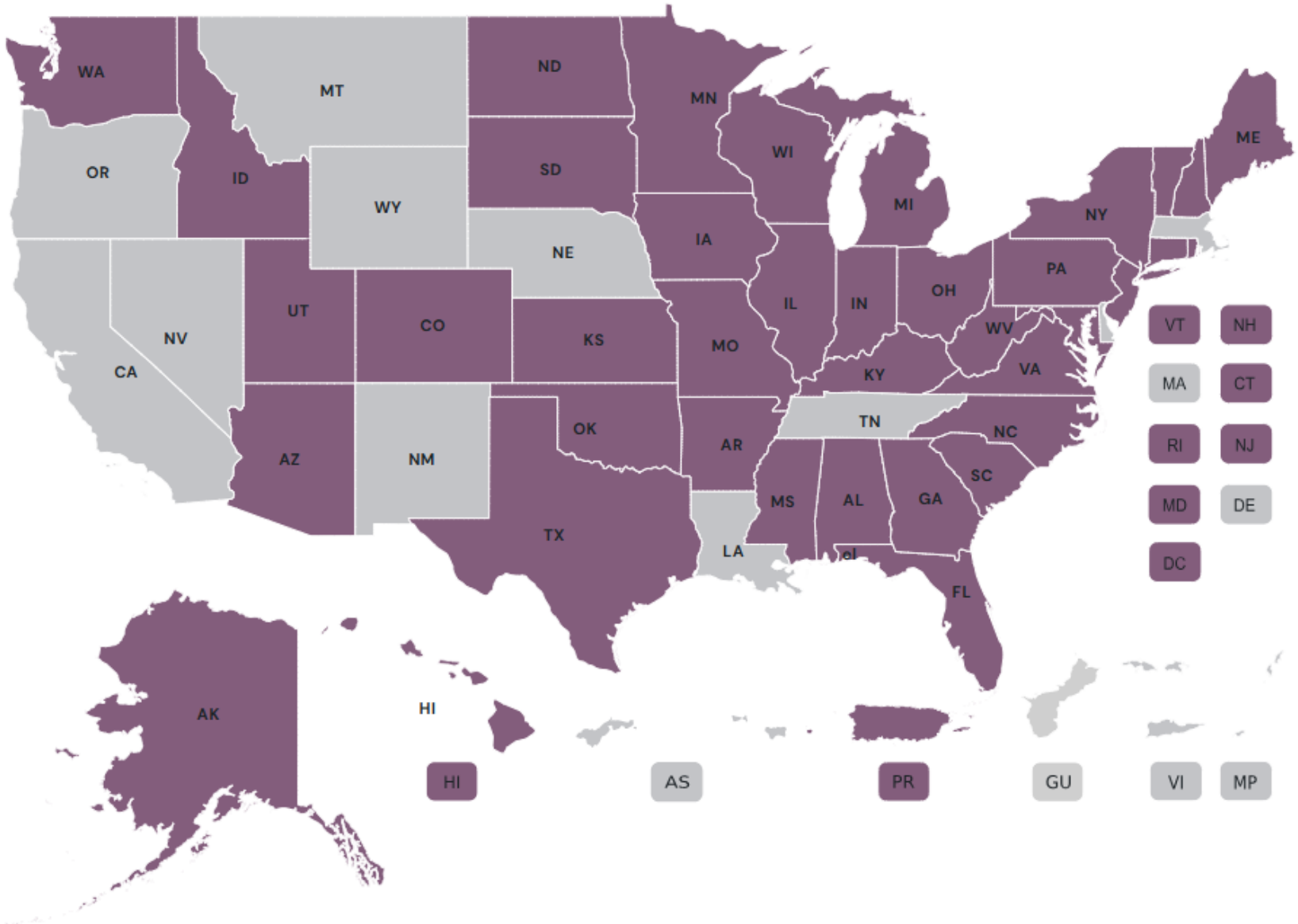
41
Active member coalitions across the country

286M
Americans represented by ANOHC member coalitions

16 YEARS
connecting coalitions nationally

1
National network connecting it all

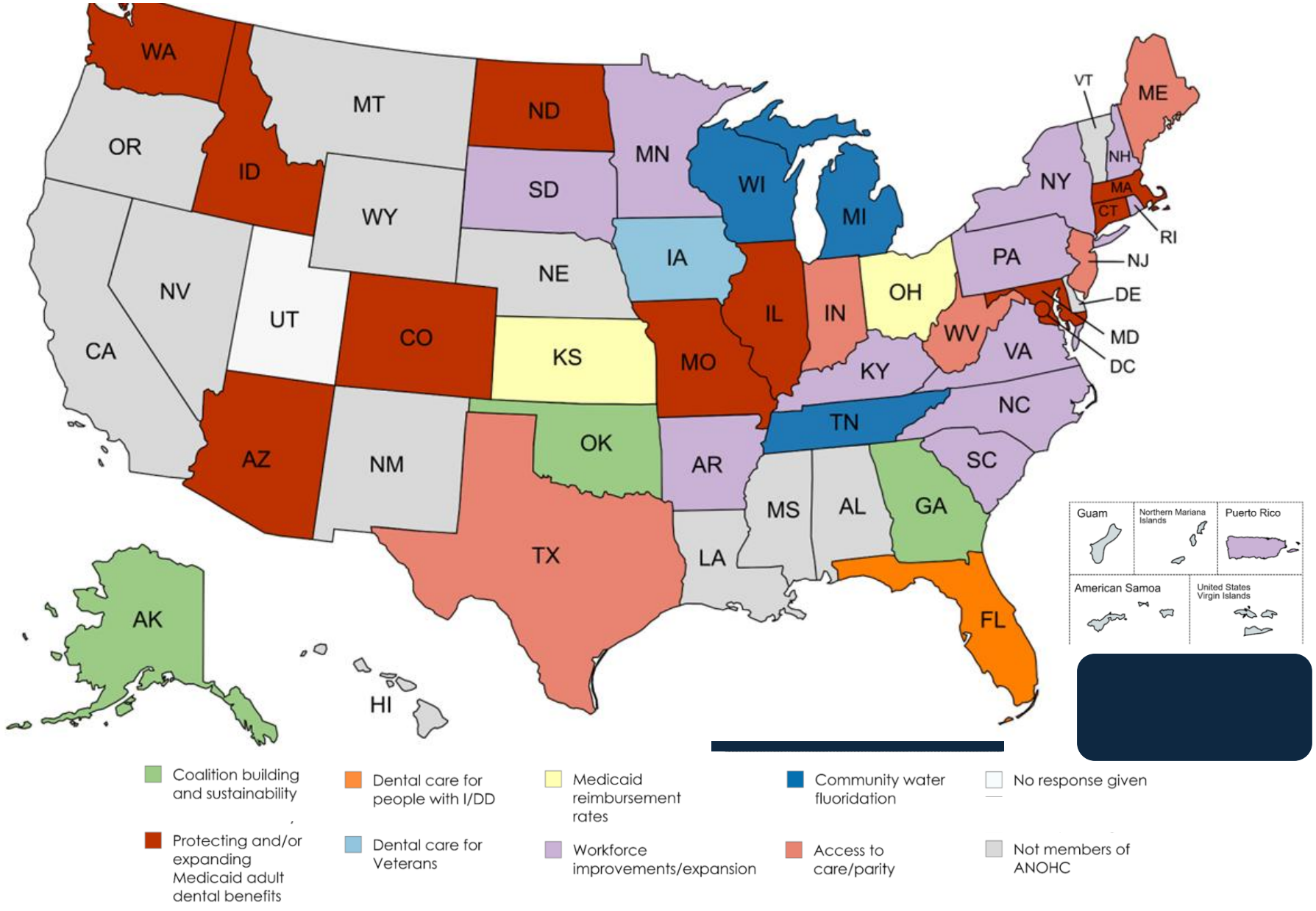
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In 2026, ANOHC members were asked to identify the top issues in their work.

- Coalition building & sustainability
- Protecting and/or expanding Medicaid adult dental benefits
- Dental care for people with I/DD
- Dental care for veterans
- Medicaid reimbursement rates
- Workforce improvements/expansion
- Community water fluoridation
- Access to care/parity





Policy Landscape

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2026 Governor Elections

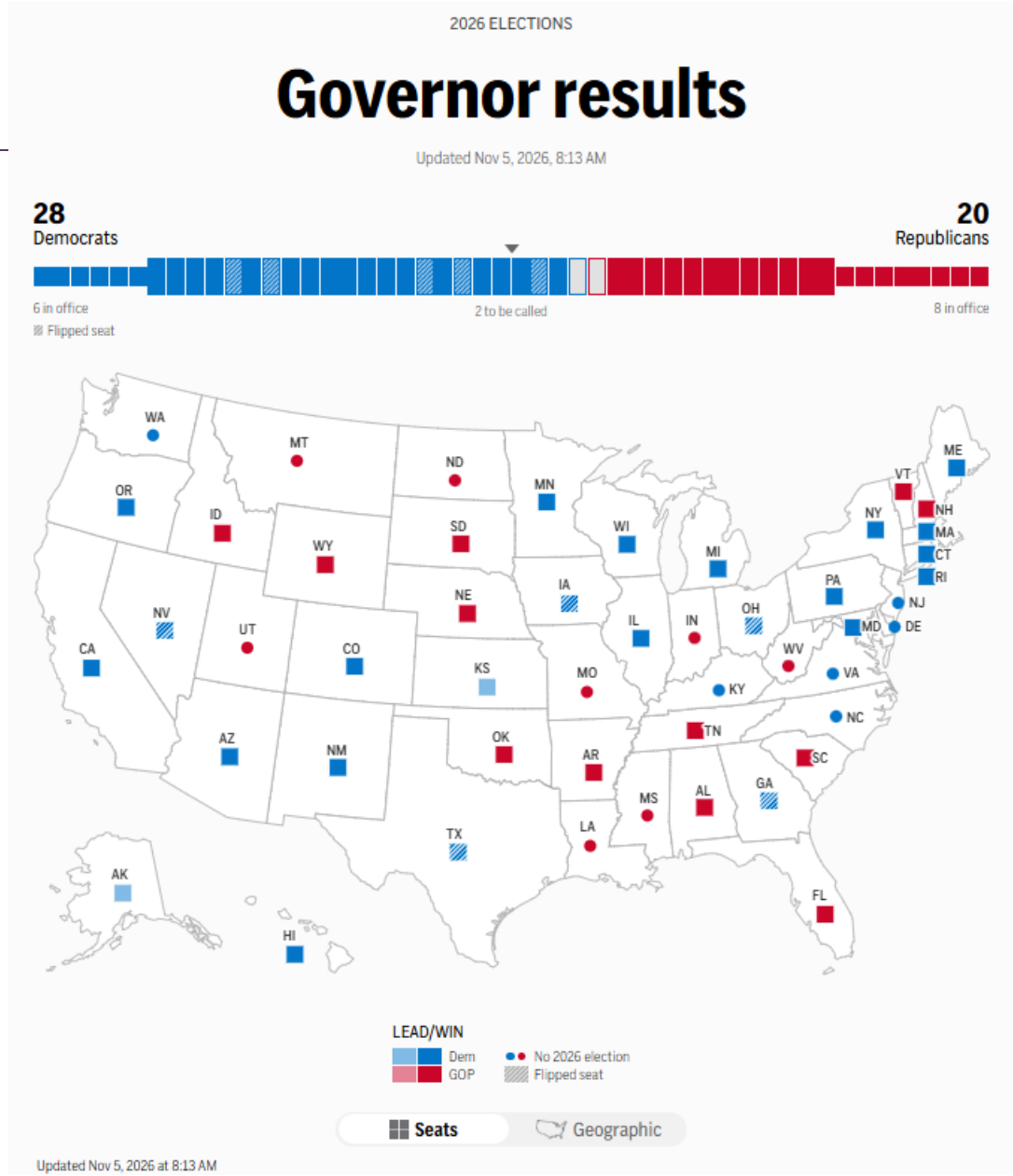


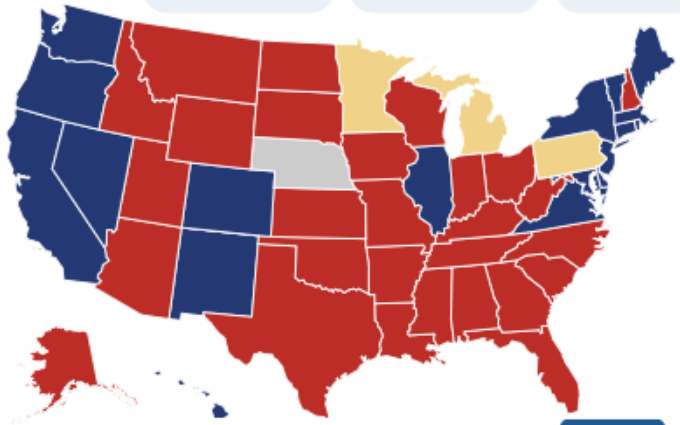
Image from the Associated Press

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Pre-Election: October 26, 2026

Legislative Control

18	28	3
Democratic	Republican	Split



Total Legislators –

3220	4023	77	66
Democrats	Republicans	Third Party	Vacancies

House Members –

2396	2940	24	53
Democrats	Republicans	Third Party	Vacancies

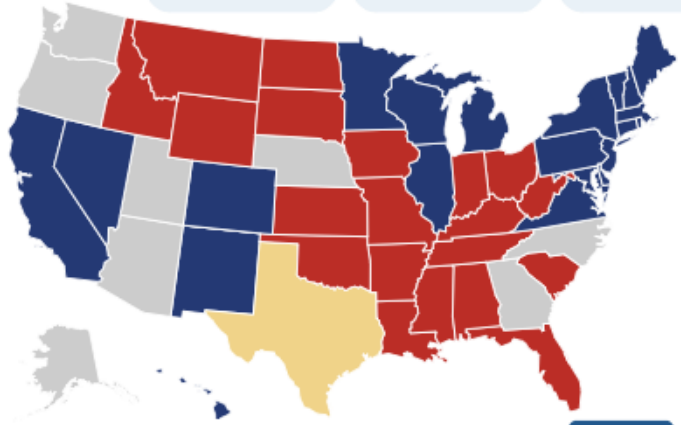
Senate Members –

824	1083	53	13
Democrats	Republicans	Third Party	Vacancies

Post-Election: November 3, 2026

Legislative Control

21	20	1
Democratic	Republican	Split



Total Legislators 7386

2832	2602	7	1945
Democrats	Republicans	Third Party	Undecided

House Members 5413

2137	1819	6	1451
Democrats	Republicans	Third Party	Undecided

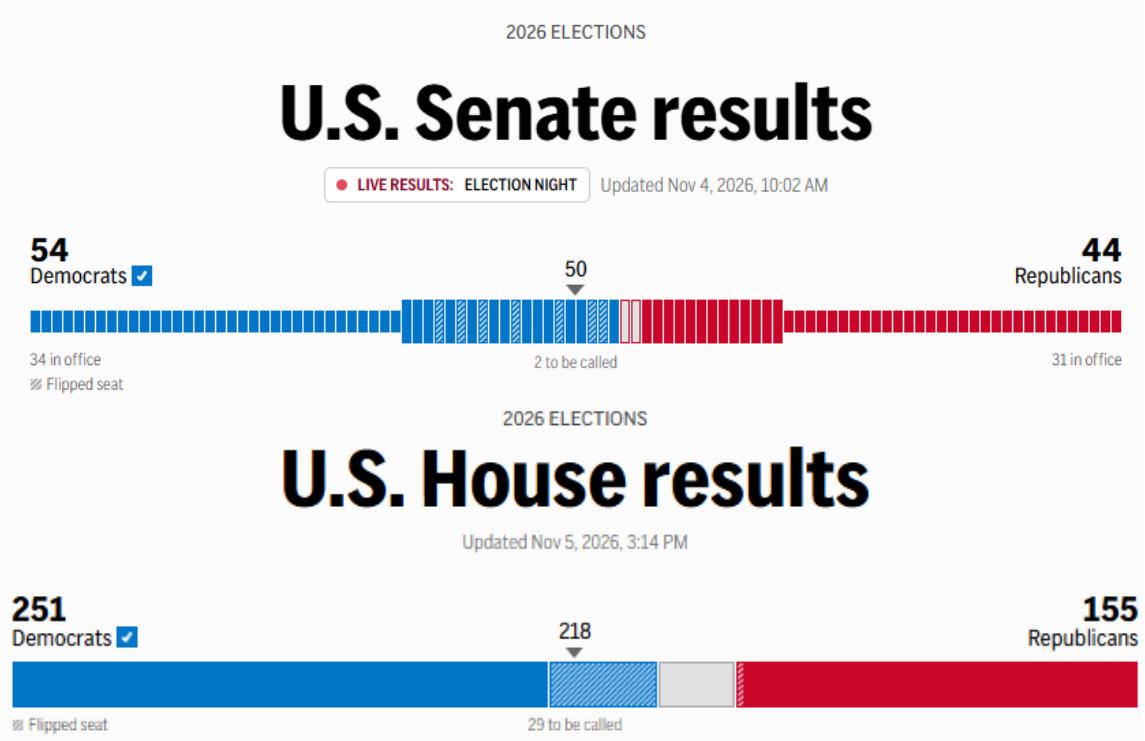
Senate Members 1973

695	783	1	494
Democrats	Republicans	Third Party	Undecided

Image from the National Conference of State Legislatures

2027-2028 Congress

- All bills will need to be reintroduced
- All new committee chairs in the House and Senate



Images from the Associated Press

Current Federal Policy Issues

- Implementation of HR 1 Medicaid cuts begins January 1, 2027
  - Community engagement (work) requirements
  - Eligibility determinations every six months
  - Freeze on State Directed Payments (Provider Taxes)
- Additional implementation of HR 1 began July 1, 2026
  - Federal graduate school loans capped at $200,000
- Why this matters
  - Eligibility cuts = Millions of Americans will lose Medicaid dental coverage
  - Funding cuts = Adult dental coverage is optional
  - Loan caps = Higher barriers for people to become dental professionals

Democrats' Plan for First 100 Hours & First Year

- First 100 Hours:
  - Add dental, vision, and hearing benefits to Traditional Medicare
- First Year:
  - Guarantee dental care regardless of age or where you live (Medicaid & CHIP)

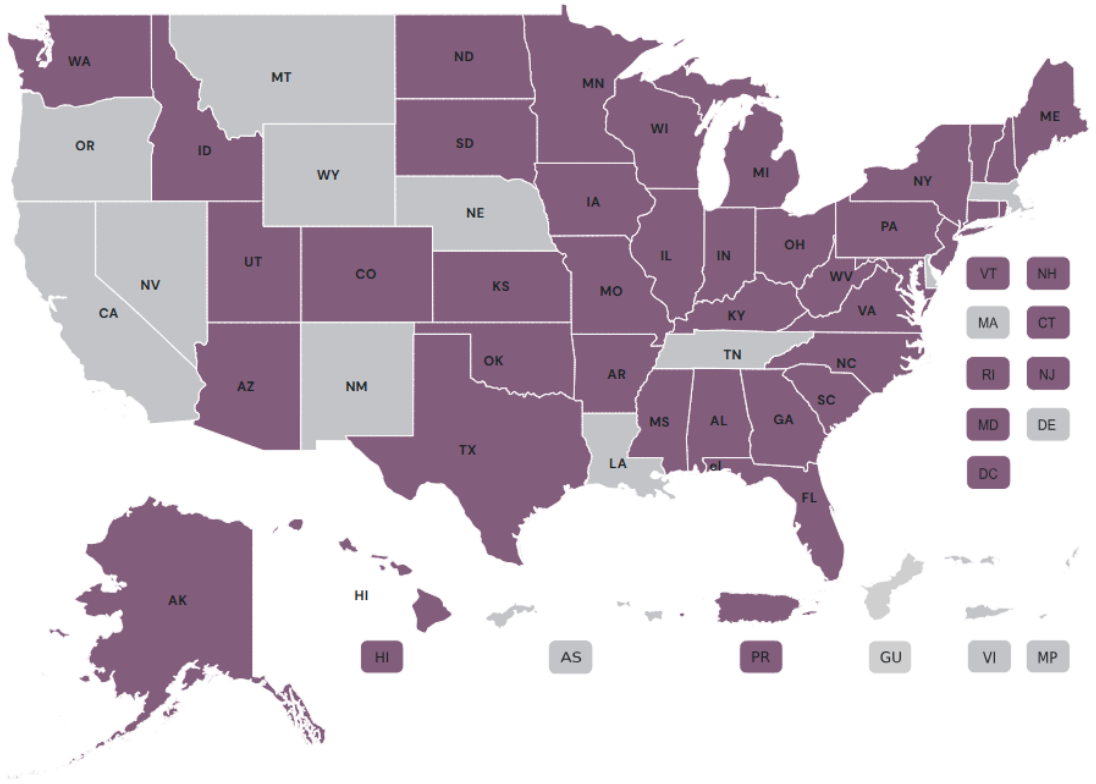
Memo leaked to *Politico* in September 2026: https://www.politico.com/f/?id=000001a0-da3a-d276-aff6-fb7f2c38000

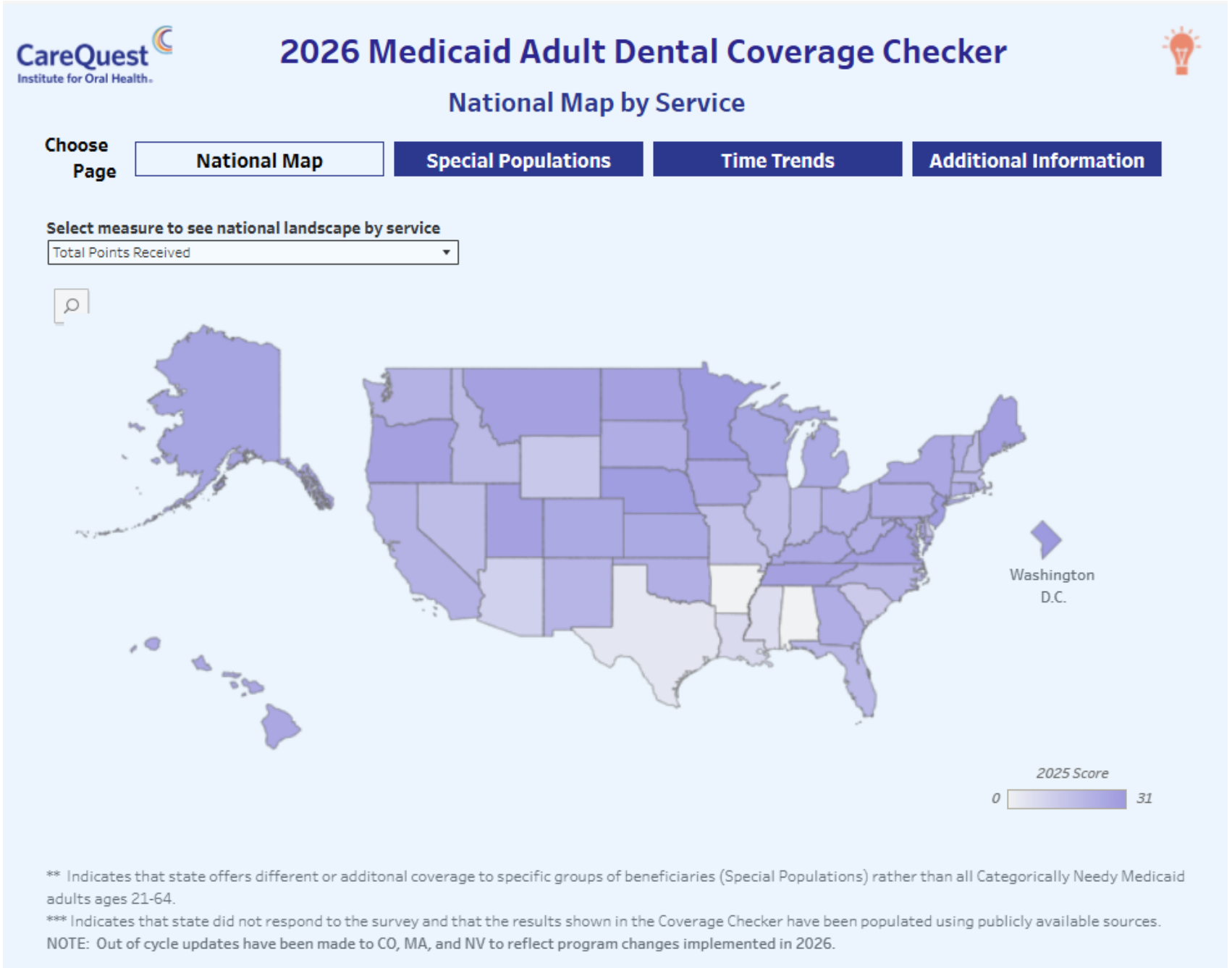
Current Federal Policy Issues

- Community Water Fluoridation
- Promoting Dental Health Act
  (Extend federal funding for CDC for five years)
- Medicare Dental, Vision, & Hearing Benefit Act of 2025
  (Provides coverage for dental services including dentures)
- Medicaid Dental Benefit Act of 2026
  (Requires states cover adult dental care)
- Dental Care for Veterans Act
  (Expands comprehensive dental care to all veterans enrolled in the VA health care system)
- Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act
  (Close insurance loophole for medically necessary treatment of craniofacial anomalies)

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What it looks like in the states

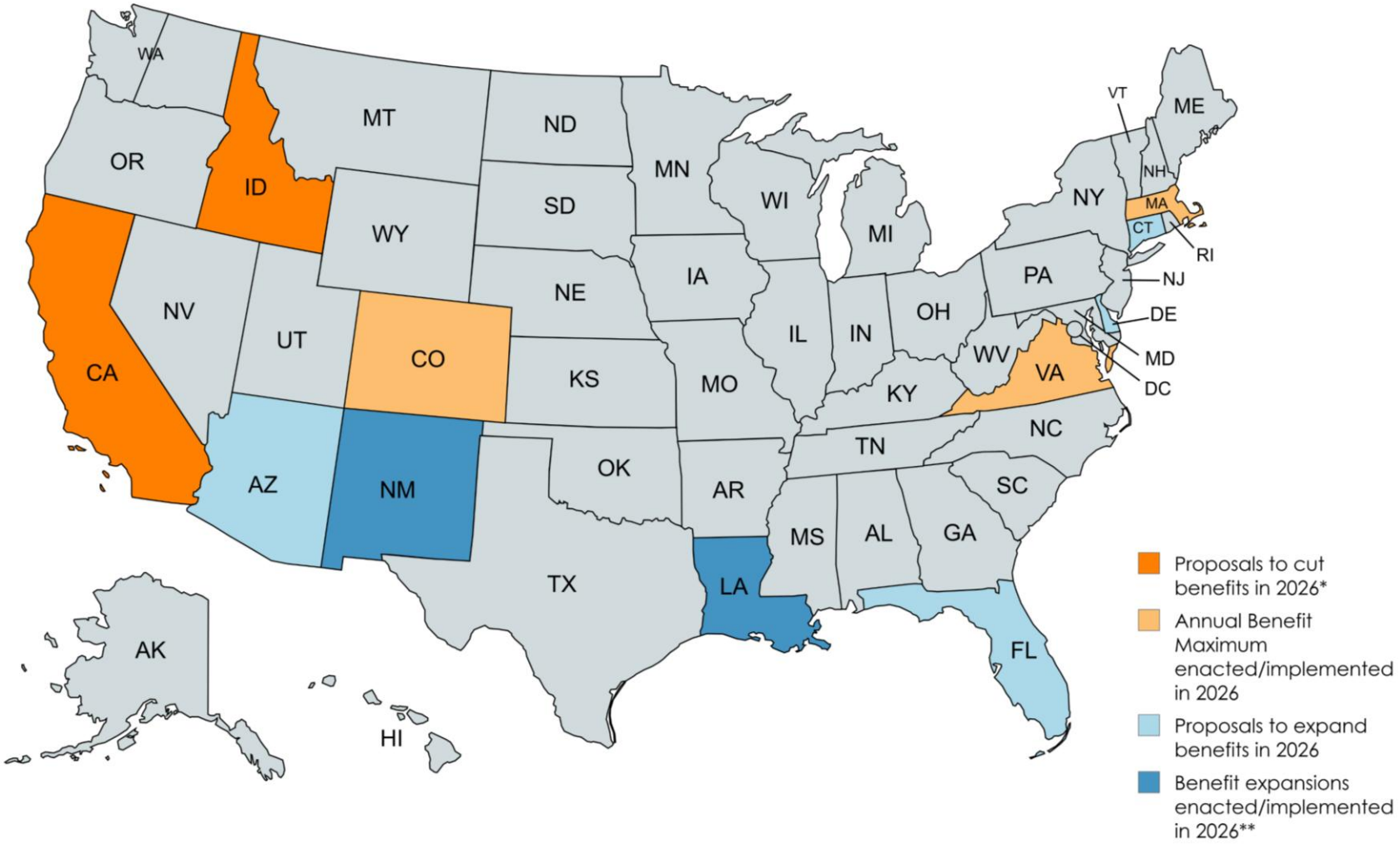




[CareQuest Institute for Oral Health: Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage Checker]

Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits

Threats, opportunities, and successes

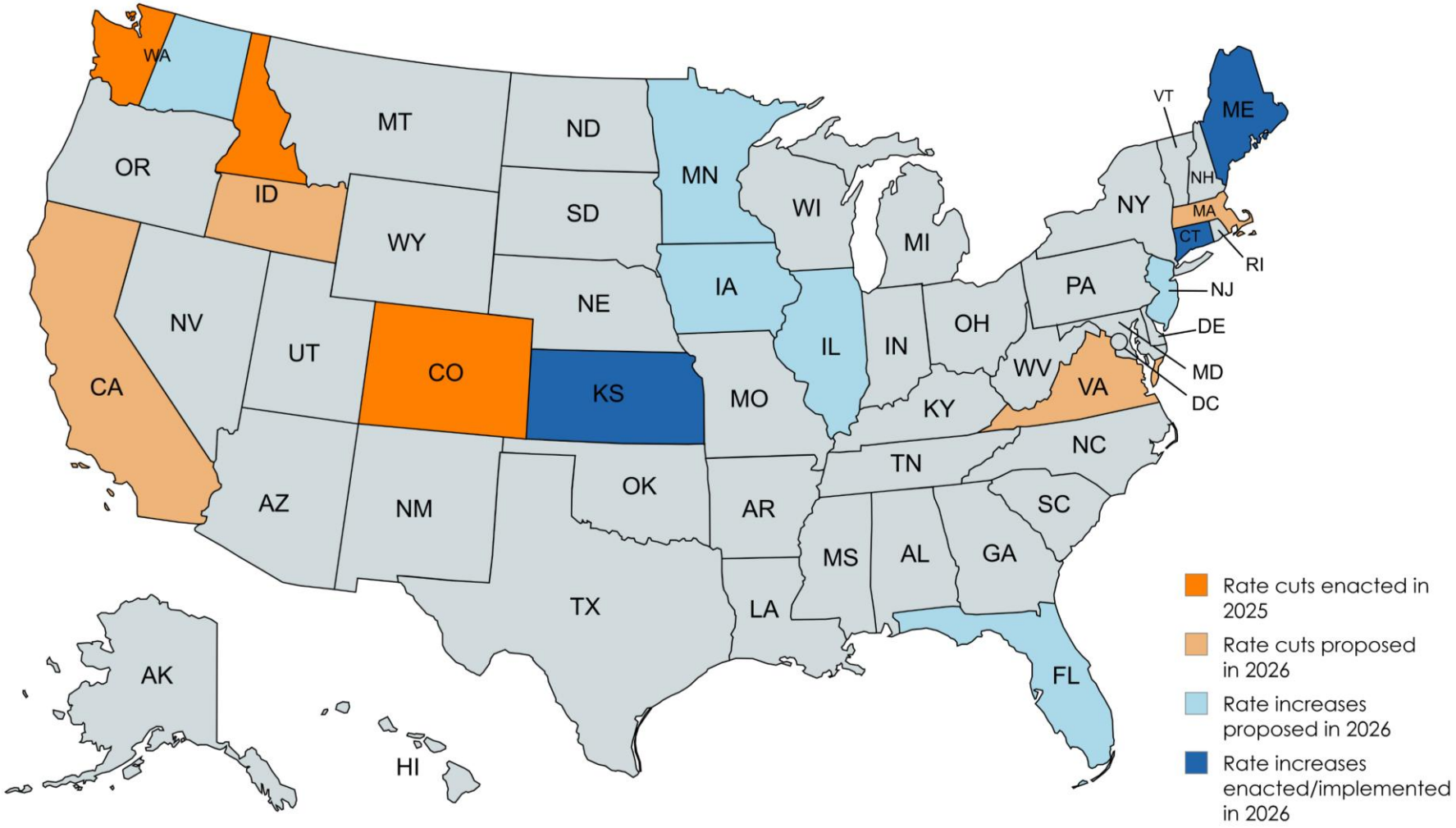


*Cuts to benefits were also proposed in CO, MA, VA in 2026.

**A Veterans Dental Program was also established in CT in 2026 via HB5406

Medicaid Reimbursement Rates

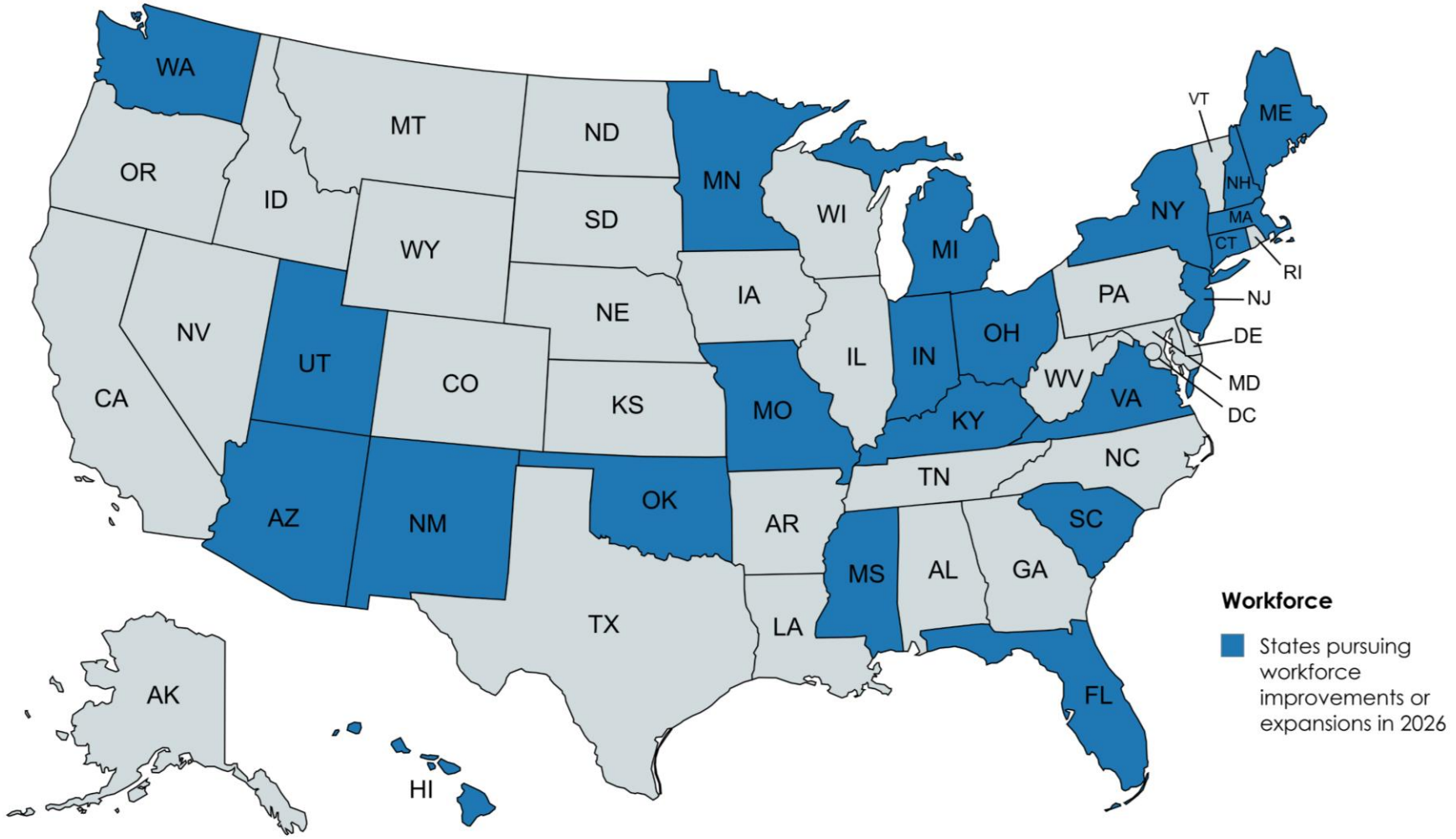
Threats, opportunities, and successes



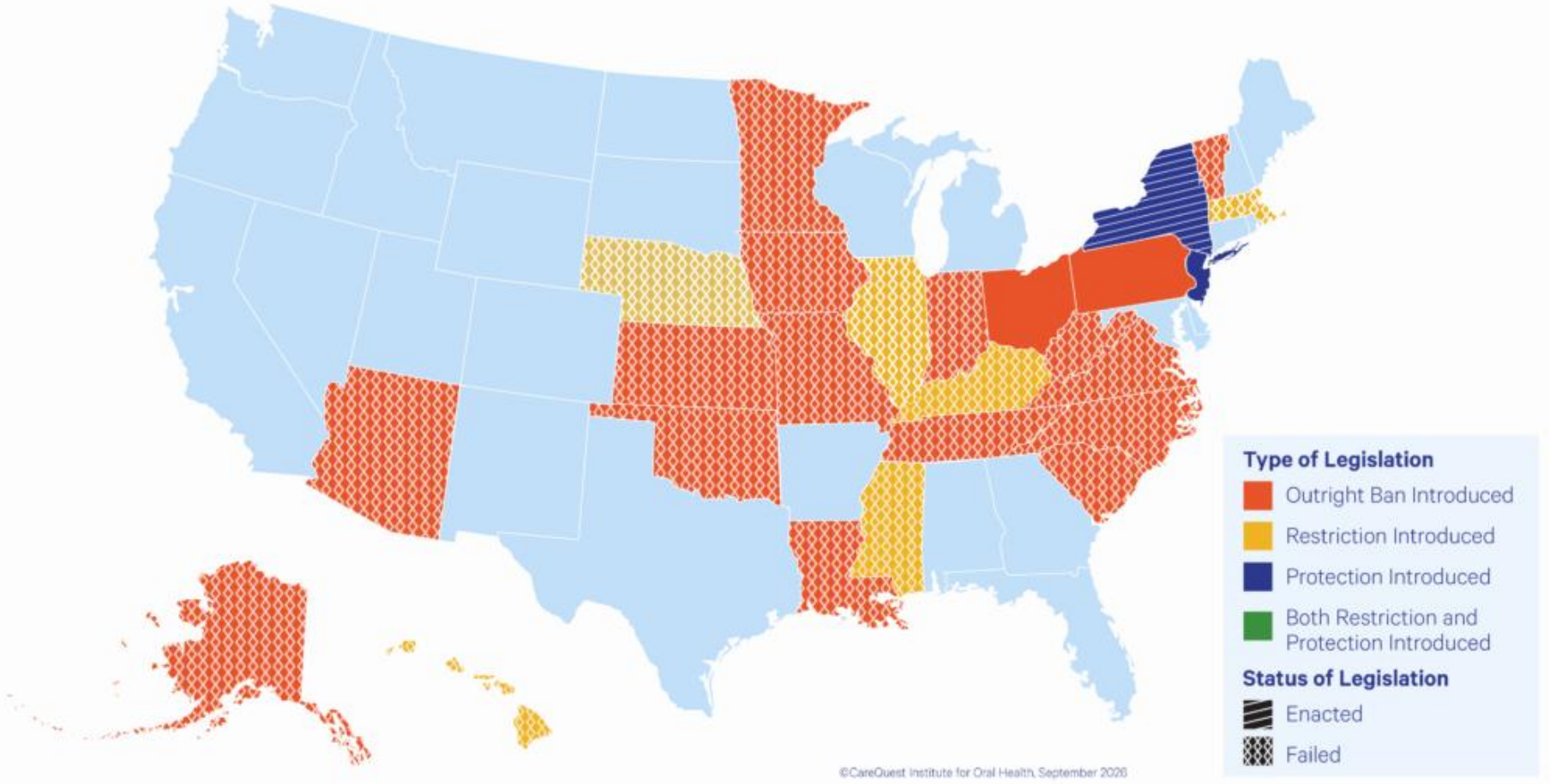
Workforce
Opportunities

States across the country are exploring ways to increase access to care including (but not limited to):

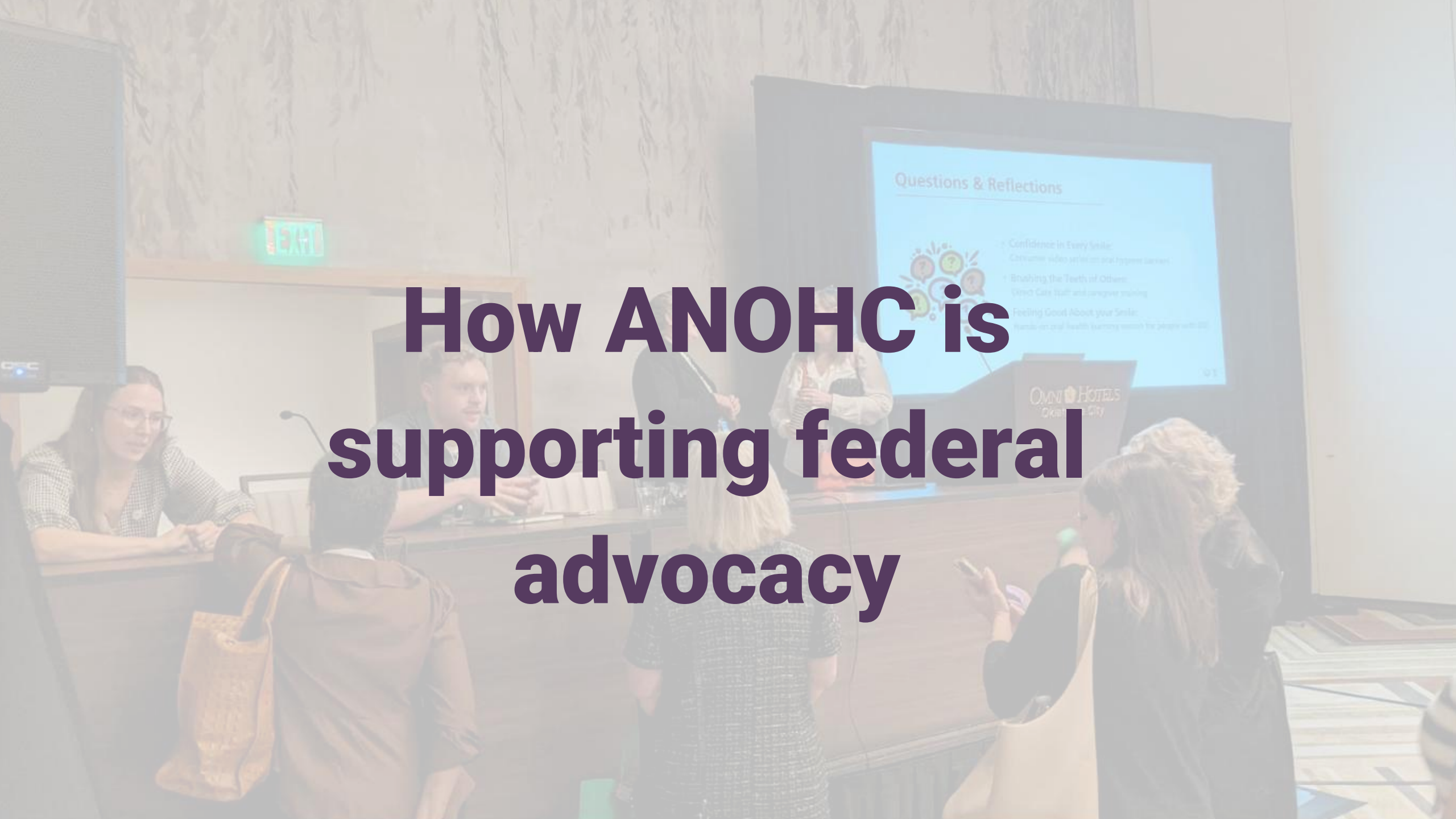
- Expanding scope of practice of existing dental team members
- Dental therapy
- Licensure of foreign-trained providers
- Dentist and Dental Hygienist Licensure Compact
- Loan forgiveness and repayment programs



2026 Community Water Fluoridation Policy Map: State Legislative Activity



CareQuest Institute for Oral Health: Policy landscape as of September 25, 2026.
For questions, please contact Matt Steele, Director, State and Local Advocacy



How ANOHC is supporting federal advocacy

ANOHC Policy Tenets

- Affordable and quality oral health care
- Health insurance coverage
- Strong state oral health programs
- Safe, fluoridated drinking water
- Robust oral health workforce
- Public health prevention initiatives

https://anohc.org/policy/

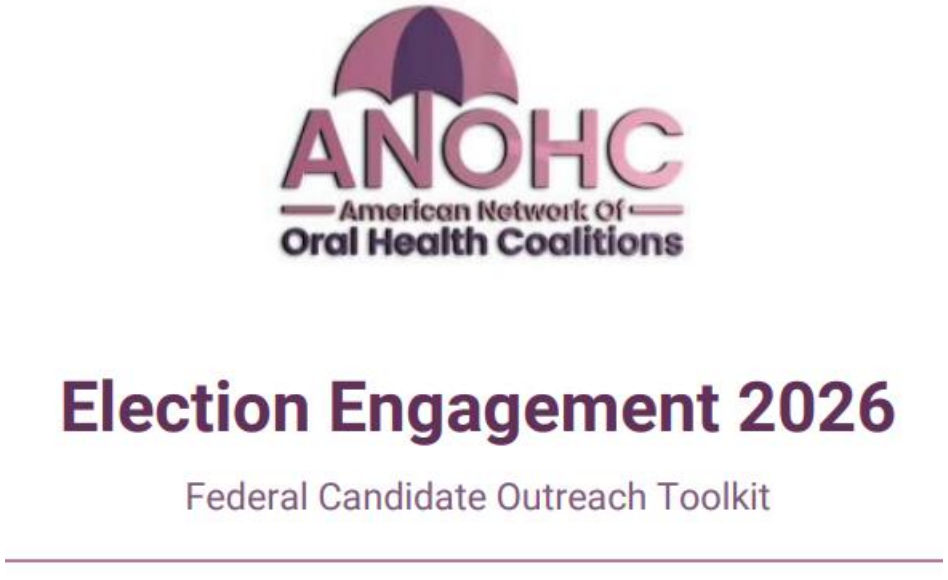
ANOHC 2026 Federal Policy Comments

- Review of the science on **fluoride** in drinking water
- Federal funding for **HRSA and CDC** oral health programs
- **Medicaid** work requirements
- Removing the option for states to cover adult dental in ACA **Essential Health Benefits**
- Retirement of the oral health **HEDIS** measures
- **Head Start** proposal to remove the federal requirements for daily toothbrushing, etc. and shift responsibility to the local/state level

https://anohc.org/policy/

Election Engagement Toolkit

- How to find your candidates
- Sample candidate questions
- Customizable outreach email



https://anohc.org/policy/

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ANOHC Members at OPEN Hill Day



Policy Asks

1

Improve access to dental care for veterans.
Support H.R.210, the Dental Care for Veterans Act, which would eliminate current statutory restrictions and make dental care a standard benefit for all veterans enrolled in the US Department of Veterans Affairs health system. Expanding access is not only critical for improving veterans' health, but also a cost-saving investment: treating gum disease among just 25% of veterans could save nearly $3 billion annually in consequential treatment of heart disease and diabetes, with savings rising to nearly $6 billion at 50% utilization. Congress should prioritize this legislation and ensure existing VA dental pilot programs are implemented effectively.



2

Protect access to essential oral health care by maintaining stable Medicaid funding. Proposed changes under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) could unintentionally limit access to dental services, especially for adults who depend on these benefits to stay healthy and avoid more costly care later. Policymakers should focus on preserving reliable funding and ensuring adult dental coverage remains available so people can get preventive care and keep overall health care costs down.



3

Ensure oral health is represented in federal agencies.
Support S.3597, the Promoting Dental Health Act, to reauthorize funding for the CDC Oral Health Program for five years, enabling states to continue preventing dental disease, reducing emergency room visits, and strengthening the oral health workforce.



CareQuest Institute for Oral Health | OPEN

National Organizations to Know

- American Academy of Developmental Medicine & Dentistry
- AAPD Resource & Policy Center
- ADA Health Policy Institute
- American Academy of Public Health Dentistry
- American Institute on Disparities in Public Health
- Association of State & Territorial Dental Directors
- CareQuest Institute for Oral Health
- Community Catalyst
- Families USA
- Justice in Aging
- National Network for Oral Health Access
- National Maternal & Child Oral Health Resource Center
- Oral Health Progress & Equity Network



Coalition Support

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Current Member Services

Roundtable Discussions and Presentations

Peer Support Program and Mentoring Program

Emerging Coalitions Learning Collaborative

Federal policy support and engagement

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Member services coming soon

Member Hub	Member Toolkit, Board materials, Annual Meeting materials, Roundtable recordings, etc.
ANOHC Connect	Oral Health and People with Disabilities Community Health Workers
Repositories	Policy tracking, Speaker Bureau, Funding
News & Templates	ANOHC newsletter, template websites, newsletters, etc.

New website

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JOIN ANOHC | MEMBER LOGIN

ABOUT ANOHC | POLICY | FIND YOUR COALITION | NEWS & SPOTLIGHTS | CONTACT

NATIONAL NETWORK

The national home for *oral health* coalitions

ANOHC connects state and territorial oral health coalitions working to advance policy, expand access to care, and strengthen oral health across the country.

Find Your Coalition | Learn about ANOHC →



Coalition leaders at ANOHC's 2026 Annual Meeting, one of 40 member coalitions representing 294 million Americans nationwide.

WHO WE ARE

A network built on state-level strength

WHAT WE DO

Advancing policy, access, and prevention

We bring coalition leaders together to

WHY IT MATTERS

Oral health is overall health

When oral health coalitions are strong



Closing Thoughts

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Coalitions are the Do-ers

- Providing tools to help partners be proactive
- Elevating policy issues
- Protecting public oral health
- Educating underserved people
- Centering the consumer voice

We make meaningful progress when we turn ideas into action.

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Collaborating to Lead Change

- Find issues of shared interest
- Build trust
- Cement relationships
- Grow influence
- Learn from each other

Thank you!

Tanya Dorf Brunner

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