

Introduced by

1 A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to study dental services in the
2 state, including the effectiveness of case management services and the feasibility of utilizing
3 mid-level providers to improve access to services and address dental service provider
4 shortages in underserved areas of the state.

5 **WHEREAS**, the 2013-14 interim Health Services Committee studied how to improve access
6 to dental services and ways to address dental service provider shortages; and

7 **WHEREAS**, dentists in rural areas of the state are often unable to generate sufficient
8 operating revenues to sustain a practice and oral health professionals are located mostly in
9 urban areas of the state, resulting in a shortage of providers in rural areas of the state; and

10 **WHEREAS**, access to dental care is limited for Medicaid-eligible children, rural residents,
11 low-income adults, the elderly, especially those in nursing homes, and Native Americans; and

12 **WHEREAS**, emergency room visits for preventable dental conditions result in unnecessary
13 costs; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the 2013-14 interim Health Services Committee learned case management
15 services may have the potential to reduce dental costs and improve access to services; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the 2013-14 interim Health Services Committee received a report on the early
17 impacts of dental therapists in Minnesota prepared by the Minnesota Department of Health and
18 Minnesota Board of Dentistry for the Minnesota Legislature in 2014 indicating mid-level
19 providers serve more patients enrolled in public health insurance programs and some patients
20 served in clinics employing dental therapists experienced reduced wait times and travel times
21 with no quality or safety concerns; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the 2013-14 interim Health Services Committee determined additional
23 information was needed regarding the effectiveness of case management services and the
24 feasibility of utilizing mid-level providers to improve access to services and address dental
25 service provider shortages in underserved areas of the state;

