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FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1884

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**FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES
2009 LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR**

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Dental Association (FDA) has chosen Sen. Don Gaetz (R-Fort Walton Beach) and Rep. Matt Hudson (R-Naples) as the 2009 *Legislators of the Year*. The awards recognize Sen. Gaetz and Rep. Hudson for their dedication to dental health care efforts in local and statewide arenas.

“Sen. Gaetz and Rep. Hudson have shown their commitment to good oral healthcare for all Floridians,” said FDA President Dr. Charles W. Hoffman. “We are happy to recognize our strong advocates with this annual award.”

Sen. Don Gaetz

A former school superintendent, Sen. Gaetz not only sponsored the FDA’s dental bill (CS/SB 702), he was also the sponsor of the direct assignment of benefits bill, CS/SB 1122. Sen. Gaetz was instrumental in supporting the FDA’s efforts in clarifying the impact of the health care clinic establishment permit legislation on dentistry adopted last year. He also co-sponsored the KidCare legislation, CS/CS/SB 918 by Sen. Nan Rich (D-Sunrise), which passed this year to help remove administrative barriers for families enrolling their children into the program.

Rep. Matt Hudson

Known for his diligent work ethic, Rep. Hudson wasted no time in getting the FDA’s dental bill, CS/HB 185, on to committees’ agendas and approved on the House floor. Rep. Hudson is consistently supportive of dental issues and has been a strong advocate for the FDA’s legislative agenda. On July 25, Rep. Hudson had the privileged of receiving his legislator award for his personal dentists, Dr. Miguel Castro, at the West Coast District Dental Association summer meeting.

The FDA is a Tallahassee-based, statewide, professional association representing member-dentists in Florida. Founded in 1884 by 12 dentists, the FDA now has almost 7,000 members, representing about 70 percent of all Florida-licensed dentists. The FDA maintains two offices in Tallahassee and has 60 employees. In addition, the organization has six regional component dental associations and 35 local affiliate associations. A constituent society of the American Dental Association, the FDA’s mission is to

improve the oral health of Florida residents through high practice standards, continuous professional education, public advocacy and improving the practice environment.

For information on about the FDA, visit www.floridadental.org.

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