

Testimony submitted by: Toni M. Parlanti, RDH

Submitted to: Senator Jonathan Harris; Representative Betsy Ritter and the Public Health Committee Members.

In Support of: Raised Bill 5630

To the Honorable Public Health Members and Co-Chairs;

My name is Toni Marie Parlanti, RDH. I am a licensed, registered public health dental hygienist practicing in Stamford. I am representing all the uninsured and under served children in the State of Connecticut. I support Raised Bill 5630, An Act Concerning the Establishment of an Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner (ADHP).

Public Health is a fairly new avenue for me. The first 21 years of my career was in a private family dental practice in Greenwich, CT. There, I saw my patients mainly on a routine basis, following the twice a year dental hygiene protocol. I also saw an extremely low amount of tooth decay, especially in children. My thought was that fluoride in our drinking water really had taken care of dental disease.

In 2006, I accepted a position as a School Dental Hygienist for the City of Stamford Health Department. This job change has humbled me. I am here today to tell you that not only is tooth decay alive and well, much of it is not being treated for reasons such as cost and the lack of providers.

On a daily basis I refer children in need of dental services. Many of these students are uninsured or on Husky. I have a list (a very short list) of Husky Providers in our local area. I am astonished each and every time I hear that the child cannot be seen for at least 6 weeks, sometimes 3 months!

The time has come for the dental hygienist to advance their training and education. An Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner in the Public Health sector will serve as a cost effective, much needed provider to this well deserving population. The children of Connecticut and their parents thank you for your support of HB 5630.

Thank You.

**Toni M. Parlanti, RDH
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