

Legislative Testimony
H.B. 5355 An Act Concerning an Advanced Dental Hygiene
Practice Pilot Program
Human Services Committee
Tuesday, March 2, 2010
Kevin McLaughlin, D.D.S.

Senator Doyle, Representative Walker, Members of the Committee, my name is Kevin McLaughlin. I am a practicing Oral and Maxillofacial surgeon in Norwalk, Connecticut. I am writing in opposition to H.B. 5355 An Act Concerning an Advanced Dental Hygiene Practice Pilot Program.

My first question I had when I read this bill is; is this the most efficacious way to help increase access to care? The CSDA (Connecticut State Dental Association) has been exploring avenues in great depth to increase access to care. One is to increase the number of provider dentists in the Medicaid program, which has been done. Another is exploration of school based clinics that have good merit in both cost and lack of appointment cancellations. Another provider such as the Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHAT) is a model that may work without such significant cost.

H.B. 5355 will need to find a licensed ADHP of which I don't think exists. Therefore we will need to relocate someone to our state for this pilot study or we need to train them in a program that does not exist. The length of time this pilot study suggests is unlikely to provide any valuable information. Most studies of this kind need a large number of practitioners and a longer track record to see if the model is successful. A longer study would obvious add to the cost.

With these concerns I ask the proponents of HB 5355; is this about access to care, or is it about the formation of a secondary provider? For both questions it is no doubt other mid-level practitioners will not cost as much and will probably be able to increase access as likely. Secondly there are other ways which are already being explored that have more merit and less cost.

For these reasons alone I oppose the state considering such a costly expense without a realistic way of execution.

Sincerely;

Kevin McLaughlin D.M.D.
148 East Ave.
Suite 2 F
Norwalk, Connecticut 06851
203-866-0061