

Legislative Testimony
H.B. 5355 An Act Concerning an Advanced Dental Hygiene
Practice Pilot Program
Human Services Committee
Tuesday, March 2, 2010
Barry J. Weiss D.M.D.

Senator Doyle, Representative Walker, Members of the Committee, My name is Barry Weiss, and I am a dentist in private practice in Hamden.

Currently, I am President of the New Haven Dental Association, I serve on the Board of Governors for the Connecticut State Dental Association and I am President of the Connecticut Society of Periodontists, which is my specialty. I have been in private practice for 8 years.

I have many concerns regarding HB 5355 and the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner (ADHP) which it would establish. I believe this bill to be highly premature at this time in that there is no data to show that expanding the scope of practice of dental providers improves access to care. Furthermore, there is no evidence that expanding the scope of practice of an already established practitioner will be cost beneficial or even safe to the public. What should be proposed in this bill is a pilot study to evaluate the need, effectiveness, and safety of an ADHP which this bill attempts to propose but does not in actuality.

On another level, since reimbursement rates for children were raised to a reasonable level, we now count over 1000 dentists enrolled as Husky providers. One must wonder whether raising the rates for the adult population will be more cost beneficial, less cost beneficial, or equally cost beneficial of incorporating an ADHP to the dental team. It seems to me that rather than trying to re-invent the wheel with an additional provider, we should be using tax dollars more efficiently by improving the already existing "wheel" whereby dentists with time tested standards and scope of practice can serve the under-served at a rate that may not be a gain but is at least not at a significant loss.

Let's look at all possible solutions before deciding which one is right for our citizens. I respectfully urge you to reject HB5355. I thank you for allowing me to testify here today.

Barry J. Weiss, D.M.D
60 Washington Avenue
#207
Hamden, CT 06518
barrwei@yahoo.com