

Testimony: Proposed HB 5616 -An Act Concerning Licensure of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners

To: Senator Musto, Representative Tercyak and members of the Human Services Committee

I support HB 5616, An Act Concerning Licensure of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners.

Licensing Masters Degree educated Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners will add another member to the dental team, who can provide preventive and primary dental services to the underserved in Connecticut.

Having an ADHP will free the dentist to treat patients with more complicated and severe dental problems, resulting in more patients receiving needed dental care. I've worked in the Public Health system for over 16 years in the City of Bridgeport. I have seen first hand the oral needs of the children in that community. I have also seen the need for more treatment options for those children whose parents are financially strapped and cannot either afford the fees that incur when they take the child to the dentist or dental clinic they are referred to, or just cannot take time off from their jobs to do so.

Too many times children come down with oral pain and are not treated, just to return to the nurse's office with the same problem, day(s), week(s) or month(s) later. The ADHP will allow dental hygienists to assist in emergency care so these dental problems can be resolved. In turn, the child (ren) will become healthier quicker. Parent(s), with the dental hygienist's assistance, can focus on finding a dental home for the child(ren), understanding the role of continued dental health care, instead of equating a dentist to an emergency visit.

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