

**Written Legislative Testimony and Letter of Support to the Human Services Committee
Regarding: *Proposed HB 5616 an Act Concerning Licensure of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners.***

Monday, February 28, 2011

Submitted by: Laurel Risom RDH MPH

**Dear Senator Musto, Representative Tercyak and
Members of the Human Services Committee,**

My name is **Laurel Risom**; I am a licensed, registered dental hygienist living in the town of Old Lyme CT. Thank you for the opportunity to present this written testimony and support of proposed HB 5616.

I support the Establishment of An Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner (ADHP) in CT and support the use of the advanced dental hygiene practitioner in public health settings. The Advanced dental hygiene practitioner can increase access to dental care for the CT underserved populations.

I have been a practicing dental hygienist for over 30 years in Connecticut. I also teach Community Dental Hygiene to Senior dental hygiene students at the University of Bridgeport. One of my responsibilities is to escort and supervise dental hygiene students out on rotation at Community sites. We visit elementary schools, WIC centers, senior centers and nursing homes, mental health programs and substance abuse centers. While out on rotation we screen patients for oral cancer and dental needs, teach better dental homecare, provide oral hygiene aids and record blood pressure screenings. Many of the populations that we visit are very much in need of dental services. We provide screening forms for those that we visit, to the nearest dental clinic, but that does not always guarantee care. Many barriers exist for these populations, economics, transportation and availability of appointment space and services at the clinics.

The advantage of the ADHP is to provide care in community settings. This midlevel care provider can help address the shortage of dentists in the work force, and provide needed care to the dentally underserved. The goal, to provide midlevel dental services to the underserved populations where they live and work, in public health settings, to help eliminate some of the barriers to care. For more information on ADHP visit the American Dental Hygiene Association (ADHA) website at <http://www.adha.org/adhp/index.html>

In closing, I would be happy to discuss HB 5616 with you and hope that you support HB 5616 in CT, to provide more access to dental care in public health settings, for the health and wellbeing of our citizens in Connecticut.

Sincerely,



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