

Testimony for Proposed H.B. No. 5616 AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE OF ADVANCED DENTAL HYGIENE PRACTITIONERS.

February 27, 2011

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

I am writing in support of Proposed House Bill No.5616, An Act Concerning Licensure of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners. I have been a registered Dental Hygienist for 34 years, and am currently a full-time Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Bridgeport, Fones School of Dental Hygiene. I can speak to the unmet dental needs in our community, as well as the educational competencies which would be required for the proposed mid-level provider in helping to alleviate dental disease, pain and suffering. I witness these phenomena on a daily basis.

In the 30-chair dental hygiene clinic at the Fones School, we provide dental hygiene services for hundreds of area residents each week. Many of these patients are among the thousands of underserved in our state. They lack the resources for regular dental care, and although we provide comprehensive referrals to area offices and clinics, this care is often out of their reach. As we take our students out into the community day care and senior centers, they are often shocked at the gaping hole of need they witness when conducting dental screenings.

As current President of the Connecticut Dental Hygienists' Association, I am in touch with dental professionals from all over the state. As women and men dedicated to providing quality dental care for all, we must join forces and work together to eliminate the disparities in dental care.

The entire dental team is challenged to provide affordable preventive and restorative dental care. An advanced dental hygiene practitioner, a mid-level provider, would be educated to provide primary care in the public health settings in our state, where they could have the most impact on the residents who fall through the cracks of regular dental services. These are often the youngest and oldest members of our community – the children and elders with unique needs and risks. As part of a dental team, which would include dentists, traditional dental hygienists, and dental assistants, the advanced dental hygiene practitioner will help in filling a great void. Each member is needed, and working as a cohesive team is the only way to accomplish our shared goal of affordable dental care for all.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Sandra Stramoski, RDH, MSDH

Clinical Assistant Professor
Fones School of Dental Hygiene
President, Connecticut Dental Hygienists' Association

ssstramos@bridgeport.edu
203-610-5961