

**Legislative Testimony  
Public Health Committee  
HB5541 AAC Services Provided by Dental Professionals and Certification for Advanced Dental  
Hygiene Practitioner  
Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health committee, my name is William Nash and I have been practicing dentistry for 33 years in the town of Fairfield. In addition, I am a Husky provider and have participated in all four Mission of Mercy clinics in Conn. I also participate in the Give Kids a Smile program. I thank you for the opportunity to present this written testimony to you in opposition to HB 5541.

I would like to start out by stating that as a product of the Department of Public Health's scope of practice process, for which my professional organization supported, I am in support of allowing hygienists to perform Interim Therapeutic Restorations (IRT) as referenced briefly in line 223 of this bill, and for allowing hygienists and dental assistants to become Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries which is in section 2 of this bill. These are competencies and roles that numerous states already allow for and could have an immediate impact on access and utilization. However, I am opposed to sections 3 through 6 which attempt to create an "Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner (ADHP)."

I oppose the sections of this bill allowing the establishment of a new provider, the ADHP. The rationale for this legislation has been to gain access to dental care for the underserved. I wish to point out that, for children there is no access problem. Every child eligible for Husky lives within 10 miles of a Husky-participating dentist. The waiting time for an appointment is 7 days, for an emergency, 24 hours. The problem is different for adults. They do not have the benefit of the reasonable fee scale provided for the children (52% of children fees). If that were the case, there would be no access problem for adults.

How would this problem be solved by the ADHP? This new provider needs to be paid and paid well, considering the time and expense of their training. With dentistry's large overhead expense, the ADHP will have to accept less money than a hygienist to work on Husky adults. Who would choose such a career path? Nothing has been solved. The State will have spent a large amount of money to establish and regulate a new provider that does not contribute to the dental health of our citizens.

In closing, I would like to again respectfully thank the members of the Public Health committee for allowing me to submit this testimony and would urge you to oppose this bill. If you should have any questions I will do my best to make myself available at your convenience.

Sincerely,

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