

Legislative Testimony
Public Health Committee
SB 993 AAC Dental Assistants and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary
Friday, March 15th, 2013
Jeffrey Berkley, D.D.S.

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health committee, my name is Jeffrey Berkley and I have been practicing dentistry for 26 years. I am the owner of Connecticut Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Centers, with offices in West Haven, North Haven, Meriden, Mansfield and Putnam. I have volunteered at each of the CT Mission of Mercy events, as well as numerous other charity programs including Give Kids a Smile, Doctors with a Heart, and as needed for people in my community who need oral surgery but can not afford care. The surgeons in our practice provide services to both children and adults through the CT Dental Health Partnership. I am Department Head of Dentistry at Midstate Medical Center and participate in the residency programs at both St. Raphael's Hospital and Yale New Haven Hospital. I am the current Vice-President of the CSDA and an officer in the NHDA. I am here to testify in favor of Senate Bill 993 An Act Concerning Dental Assistants and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries.

Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary is more than a concept. It is a model that actually exists in over 40 states and is also used in the military and the Public Health Service and the Indian Health Service.

In some of those settings it has been shown to markedly increase efficiency. Because the EFDA practices reversible procedures under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist there is a track record of no significant incidence of adverse events. The Connecticut Department of Public Health reported favorably on this provider type last year.

The increased efficiency of a dental facility that utilizes an Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary should allow more patients to be treated. It would have an immediate impact on care for Husky and other patients in Connecticut. In contrast to Medicine, most providers in Dentistry are general practitioners (primary care providers) and therefore would be significantly aided by the skill-set of an EFDA.

As an added benefit, it might attract more people and more highly qualified people into the field by providing a career ladder. The EFDA program is available to both dental assistants and dental hygienists.

This proposal, backed by the CSDA, has been shown to be effective in making dental care more efficient and productive in the military and other settings. Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries have a track record, proven safety and effectiveness, and potential to stabilize or lower the costs of care. The CSDA, and I personally, would be happy to make ourselves available to help answer any questions that would further this process. In closing, I would like to again thank the members of the Public Health committee for allowing me to submit this testimony and would urge you to support Senate Bill 993.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Berkley, D.D.S.

323 Main Street

West Haven

(203)937-7181

Jawdoctor@yahoo.com