



Dental Assisting National Board, Inc.

Measuring Dental Assisting Excellence®

**Written Testimony by Cynthia C. Durley, M.Ed., MBA
for the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc.
In Connection with Raised Bill 993**

*Submitted to the Public Health Committee
The Honorable Terry B. Gerratana and the Honorable Susan M. Johnson, Co-Chairs
Connecticut General Assembly
March 15, 2013*

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in connection with Raised Bill 993. My name is Cindy Durley, and I am Executive Director of the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB), headquartered in Chicago, Illinois.

The Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB), a nonprofit organization, is the American Dental Association-recognized national certification board for dental assistants. DANB's mission is to promote the public good by providing credentialing services to the dental community. DANB administers the nationally recognized Certified Dental Assistant™ (CDA®) certification program and a series of other certifications and knowledge-based competency examinations for dental assistants. DANB's exams and certifications are required or meet a part of requirements for dental assistants to qualify to perform prescribed duties in 38 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the U.S. Air Force. As part of our mission, DANB collects and compiles information about dental assisting laws and regulations nationwide and takes note of trends in oral healthcare, so that we may be ready to assist the stakeholders who rely on our services to measure the competency of allied dental personnel.

DANB supports the definition of a career ladder for dental assistants in Connecticut and the definition of associated educational and competency measurement requirements for each level as proposed in Raised Bill 993. From DANB's position as an information resource about the profession of dental assisting nationwide, we find the model proposed in Connecticut Raised Bill 993 to be in line with an increasing trend across the nation to permit dental assistants to perform certain expanded functions under a dentist's supervision if they have met advanced education and examination requirements, subject to the rules of each state's dental board.

Since DANB is mentioned in Bill 993, we would like to provide some additional information about DANB's services as they may relate to this legislation:

- The certifications that will be required to qualify as a "credentialed dental assistant" are DANB's Certified Dental Assistant™ (CDA®) certification and DANB's Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA®) certification; these certification programs have been in existence for 65 and 27 years, respectively, and are independently accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), helping to ensure that the exams underlying these certifications are valid, reliable, and legally defensible

- As of March 14, 2013, there are over 34,000 individuals holding DANB's CDA certification and over 1,400 individuals holding DANB's COA certification; of these, there are 593 individuals with Connecticut addresses holding CDA certification and 30 individuals with Connecticut addresses holding COA certification
- In April 2011, DANB began administering the national Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant (CPFDA™) certification, which consists of four component exams covering coronal polishing, placement of sealants, application of topical fluoride, and application of topical anesthetic; to date, Arizona, New Mexico, and Ohio recognize this certification and its component exams as meeting state dental assisting requirements
- In May 2013, DANB will begin administering the national Certified Restorative Functions Dental Assistant (CRFDA™) certification, consisting of six component exams covering anatomy, morphology, and physiology; isolation procedures; impression procedures; temporaries; placement of sealants; and restorative functions
- DANB exams are objective exams, administered at over 250 proctored, secure computerized testing sites nationwide, including three in Connecticut
- DANB provides online credential verification for all DANB-administered credentials
- DANB monitors and enforces against fraudulent use of DANB credentials and notifies state regulatory boards of violations, when appropriate
- DANB can provide state dental boards, free of charge, periodic reports of candidate performance on DANB exams; custom reports can also be provided upon request, free of charge

In summary, many of the tools that will be needed to implement the new law are already available through DANB. We believe that the availability of DANB's national certifications and competency examinations covering expanded duties that are contemplated in Raised Bill 993 will enable quick and efficient implementation of this new law at minimal or no cost to the State of Connecticut, and will assist the Connecticut State Dental Commission in meeting its public protection mission.

Following the consideration of a similar bill in a prior legislative session, DANB was consulted about the correct use of its protected marks and the accuracy of references to DANB and its services in the proposed legislation. DANB has reviewed the language of Raised Bill 993 and finds that the language used with respect to DANB is accurate and acceptable as written.

Questions about this information provided here or any other aspect of DANB's services may be addressed to Cindy Durley, DANB's Executive Director, at cdurley@danb.org or 1-866-357-3262 or Katherine Landsberg, DANB's Assistant Director, Government Relations, at klandsberg@danb.org, or 1-800-367-3262, ext. 431.

Once again, we thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony, and we encourage the members of the Public Health Committee to vote in favor of Raised Bill 993.