

Legislative Testimony
Public Health Committee
HB 6275 An Act Concerning Certification of Advanced Dental Hygiene
Practitioners
Wednesday, March 11, 2015
Scott A. Bialik, D.D.S.

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, I am in opposition of House Bill 6275 An Act Concerning Certification of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners.

I am a Pediatric Dentist practicing in Brookfield Connecticut, and have been doing so since 1997. In the past I have served as a clinical instructor at Danbury Hospital and at Yale New Haven's Children's Hospital. I am a member of the CT State Dental Association (CSDA), past President of the Greater Danbury Dental Society, a past president of the CT Society of Pediatric Dentistry (CSPD), and a member of the CT Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (CTAAP). I am also a board member of COHI (Connecticut Oral Health Initiative) and served on the board of Connecticut's Home By One project for infants. Furthermore I also currently serve as a member of the DSS's Connecticut Dental Health Partnership Dental Policy Advisory Council, which provides oversight of our states Dental Medicaid System and am HUSKY/Medicaid provider as well.

HB 6275, An Act Concerning Certification of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners aims to improve access to protective and preventive dental services, and improve oral health by allowing advanced dental hygiene practitioners to provide certain services to underserved populations.

At many times in the past when this idea has been proposed, the Department of Oral Public Health, a division of the Connecticut Department of Public Health, has determined that there are a sufficient number of dentists in Connecticut to meet the needs of the population.

As of the last meeting of the Health Partnership Dental Policy Advisory Council, it has been reported that the utilization of dental services has risen above that of the utilization of private dental insurance. Clearly if the utilization of services for the HUSKY/Medicaid population is above that of those with private insurance, one must conclude that the needs of this population is being met.

As for addressing the "Access to Care" question, currently there is no evidence available from any state that shows expanding the scope of practice of Hygienist improves access to care.

I submit that the true intent behind this bill is to simply create another form of practitioner thus creating a turf war over scope of practice. The Public Health Committee has come to this same conclusion for many years in the past, and declined to act on it.

If this act were to be approved, the costs to the state would be in the form of Medicaid fees (DSS) to support ADHP, and regulatory costs (DPH). Currently, the DPH has no means of regulation for this proposed practitioner. Additional new staff would have to be hired, new forms, new processes, complaints investigated, prosecution, adjudication...these cost would add up quickly. These are quite simply costs that CT cannot afford.

H.B. No. 6814 AN ACT CONCERNING DENTAL ASSISTANTS AND EXPANDED FUNCTION DENTAL AUXILIARY, does far more addressing the needs of our population, and also creates a career tract for Hygienists as well as Dental Assistants.

I would like to sincerely thank-you for your time and am in hopes that you will oppose House Bill 6275 An Act Concerning Certification of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioners.

Respectfully Submitted,

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