Opposition to proposed SB 40
An Act Concerning the Certification of Dental Therapists

Dear Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, and Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Dr. Laurence Levy and I am a general dentist practicing in Middletown, CT for 25 years. I am also a member of the Connecticut State Dental Association Board of Governors, District VII. I am writing this testimony in opposition to proposed SB 40 - An Act Concerning the Certification of Dental Therapists. As stated in your Statement of Purpose, the purpose of this act is to increase access to dental care. It has been shown through our Husky program that the State of Connecticut does not have an access to care problem. In fact, we are a model for the nation to follow in ways to improve access to care.

In the 2016 legislative session, EFDA-Expanded Function Dental Assistants were approved. In Connecticut, they are a new member of the dental team. We are the 46th state in the nation to approve this legislation. Other states have had EFDA for 30 years. Currently, there is a standards committee in the process of developing a curriculum and responsibilities for this new dental position. Once established, every member of the dental team will be eligible to obtain an EFDA certification. I do not see how it is possible to approve a Dental Therapist model at this time as we do not know exactly what the responsibilities of the EFDA will be or its impact on Access to Care. Please allow the EFDA model to develop and see its impact before we rush to create another member of the dental team.

As you are well aware, the dentists in Connecticut are truly concerned and are very proactive in solving the Access to Care issue in our state. We have one of the highest dentist participation rates in the dental Medicaid program. Overall, the dentists in our great state provide millions of dollars of charitable dental care through the Mission of Mercy (CTMOM) program, and other charitable dental programs. We have worked with the legislature to improve the overall oral health of the residents of Connecticut for years. If you want to really help the residents of our state, please consider expanding Husky to include more adults and with the current budget situation, do everything possible to maintain the current level of funding in the Husky program.

Sincerely,

Laurence K Levy DMD
CDSA Board of Governors, District VII