



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

March 11, 2019

**Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
860-509-7101**

House Bill #7281 - An Act Concerning the Practice of Dental Therapy by Licensed Dental Hygienists

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports the concept of the practice of dental therapy by certain licensed dental hygienists, but opposes the language in House Bill #7281. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

The Department's concern about House Bill #7281 is that it does not include certain provisions that DPH believes are critical to implement this concept. These provisions include the qualifications for a dental hygienist to practice dental therapy, specifications for the collaborative agreement between a dental therapist and dentist, the roles and responsibilities of the supervising dentist, and the number of dental therapists a dentist may supervise.

Should the Committee choose to move forward with House Bill #7281, the Department respectfully requests that the Committee review House Bill #7303, An Act Concerning Recommendations of the Department of Public Health Regarding Dental Practitioners. House Bill #7303 includes the dental therapy concepts outlined in House Bill #7281, but also the additional provisions needed by the Department as listed above.

It is important to note that a scope of practice process, convened by the Department in 2011, demonstrated that dental hygienists who receive appropriate education and training can safely engage in the expanded functions related to dental therapy.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.