

Legislative Testimony
Public Health Committee

HB 7303 - An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Department of Public Health Regarding Dental Practitioners

HB 7281 - An Act Concerning the Practice of Dental Therapy by Licensed Dental Hygienists

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

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

My name is Dr. Laurence Levy. I have been a practicing general dentist in Connecticut for 28 years. My office is located in Middletown. I currently serve on the Board of Governors for the Connecticut State Dental Association, District VII; and volunteer as one of the Co-Chairs of the Connecticut Mission of Mercy Free Dental Clinic.

I am writing in opposition to House Bill 7281 – An Act Concerning the Practice of Dental Therapy by Licensed Dental Hygienists and in support of House Bill 7303 - An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Department of Public Health Regarding Dental Practitioners with modifications to section 4 which addresses dental therapy.

I support HB 7303 paragraph 1, sections 1&2 of the Department of Public Health's bill regarding PGY1. I did a 1 year general practice residency when I graduated from dental school and learned more in 1 year PGY1, than in four years of dental school. I think this should be mandatory for all graduates.

I support HB 7303 paragraph 2 section 4 with modifications:

- Paragraph (4)(b)(1) – I oppose the requirement of a dental hygiene license; but support a basic CODA model
- Paragraph (4) - I support dental therapists limited to public health settings such as community centers and school based health centers
- Paragraph (4) (b) (4) (a) - I support a pathway to general supervision prior to dental therapist entering into a collaborative agreement with a licensed dentist, however, I believe the appropriate levels of clinical training should be 2 years or 2,500 hours of clinical training under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist.

I support HB 7303 paragraph 3 section 7 giving CE credits for those that volunteer for Mission of Mercy. As one of the co-chairs of the project, I know firsthand what our volunteers experience. Many give up multiple days in their offices to volunteer for this project and volunteer year after year. I think it is wonderful that the DPH is willing to

recognize our volunteers with CE credit. I would categorize the CE under life experiences.

I completely oppose HB 7281- An Act Concerning the practice of Dental Therapy by Licensed Dental Hygienists, but I support the CODA approved Dental Therapist in a public health setting. I do not understand why a person must be a licensed dental hygienist first. The CODA approved model will be much more affordable for an applicant and if any currently licensed dental hygienists want to be dental therapists, they may do so.

Respectfully Submitted,
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