

May 12, 2019

Submitted via e-mail

Oregon House of Representatives

Dear Representative _____:

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is writing to urge your support for a House hearing and passage of S.B. 835, legislation that would delineate criteria for a dentist to advertise as a dental specialist in the state of Oregon. Specifically, S. 835 provides that:

“A dentist licensed by the Oregon Board of Dentistry may advertise that the dentist is a specialist in one or more areas of dentistry if the dentist:

- (a) Has completed a post-doctoral residency program that is at least two years in length and is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, or its successor organization, and approved by the board by rule;
- (b) Is a specialist as defined by the National Commission on Recognition of Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards, or its successor organization, and adopted by the board by rule; or
- (c) Has completed an advanced dental education program that is at least two years in length and is recognized by the United States Department of Education, and approved by the board by rule.”

The AAPD represents the specialty of pediatric dentistry.¹ Pediatric dentists are the pediatricians of dentistry. The specialty of pediatric dentistry is an age-defined specialty that provides both primary and comprehensive preventive and therapeutic oral health care for infants and children through adolescence, including those with special health care needs. This includes but is not limited to: the management of the growth and development of the jaws and teeth of children; counseling and primary dental care; dental disease management and treatment; comprehensive advanced behavior management techniques including proper administering of local anesthesia, inhalation sedation and proper in office

¹ The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is the recognized authority on children’s oral health. As advocates for children’s oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies and clinical guidelines; educates and informs policymakers, parents and guardians, and other health care professionals; fosters research; and provides continuing professional education for pediatric dentists and general dentists who treat children. Founded in 1947, the AAPD is a not-for-profit professional membership association representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its 10,500 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs.

sedation or hospital dentistry. These are just a few of the specialty techniques that are taught in pediatric dentistry residency training programs.

In order to become a specialist in pediatric dentistry, an additional two to three years of advanced residency training is required following graduation from dental school. As a result of this additional training, pediatric dentists are uniquely qualified to be the primary and specialty oral care providers for infants and children through adolescence, including those with special health needs. Pediatric dentists are also eligible to become board certified and Diplomates of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry (the specialty certifying board of Pediatric Dentistry). This requires a pediatric dentist to have their credentials verified while successfully completing voluntary examinations and re-certification. Currently about 80 percent of all pediatric dentists in the U.S. are board certified.

Proper techniques are important as they aid in achieving positive dental outcomes and experiences for a child. The establishment of trust and a positive attitude towards dental health and their future dental well-being and care is important. Pediatric dentistry clinical recommendations have been established and are constantly reviewed and updated by the AAPD so that the practice of pediatric dentistry is effective, safe, and evidence-based.

For the above reasons, we believe that the children and families of Oregon deserve to know whether a pediatric dentist specialist is their dental provider, and this should be clearly distinguishable in advertisements from services provided by a general dentist.

It is critical for Oregon to protect the public from any misleading or deceptive dental advertising. S. 835 will help achieve this goal.

Thank you for considering our request. Should you have any questions concerning this letter please contact C. Scott Litch, AAPD Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel (312-337-2169 ext. 29 or slitch@aapd.org).

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph B. Castellano
President

Dr. John S. Rutkauskas
Chief Executive Officer