

March 3, 2021

House Committee on Health Care

900 Court Street NE

Salem, Oregon, 97301

Subject: Significant Concern with HB 2528

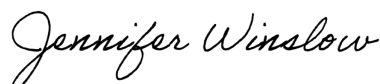
Chair Prusak, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Salinas,

I am a pediatric dentist practicing in Silverton, Oregon. I am also part of a group practice in Oregon with other clinics located in Keizer, Salem, Corvallis, and Hillsboro. Collaboratively, we treat thousands of Medicaid patients in a month.

Today I write with significant concerns on the Dental Therapy bill, HB 2528. This bill appears to try to increase the access care. I feel strongly that there are better ways to approach the issues with access to care that does not compromise the care the patients receive. That is my biggest concern is the risk that it puts the patients under by allowing dental therapist to provide care that dentist or dental specialist should be doing. Dental therapist do not receive the same level of education that dentist do. We spend years in undergrad education learning the basics of anatomy/biology/physiology of how the body works and then further our education to focus on the oral anatomy/physiology with connection of the overall health. This is what allows us to be able to diagnose and treat properly. Dental therapist would receive minimal education without getting a full understanding. This ultimately leads to cause harm to the patient. We as healthcare providers are sworn to first "Do No Harm." Dental therapist are not held to the same standards. There are better alternatives to increasing access to care. There are so many providers in the state of Oregon that would love to treat Medicaid patients but due limitations and frustrations it prevents them from accepting Medicaid. These limitations and frustrations consist of denied contracts, capitations, paying specialists the rate of general dentists, and the lists goes on. So I believe, as I am sure many others do as well, that by working to improve these issues is what is ultimately going to help increase the access to care and be able for Medicaid patients to receive the care they deserve.

Please do not move this bill out of committee without substantial revisions to ensure patient safety. We want to actively be involved in this decision process and hope to open the communication lines to do so. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jennifer Winslow

Silverton, Oregon