

House Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon, 97301

Subject: Support for HB 2528

Chair Prusak, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Salinas, and committee,

I have had the unique opportunity and pleasure to serve for the past 2 years as the Supervising Dentist to a Dental Therapist who will soon be moving to Oregon to join Dental Pilot Project #100. Since he joined our clinic directly after graduating from the Alaska Dental Therapy Education Program, I have been impressed with his knowledge and skills. After some time observing his work via close supervision I felt very comfortable with his ability to provide dental exams, restorations, extractions, and preventive services for our patients. Personally, I would be happy to be a patient of his and bring my family in to see him. Not only were his clinical skills an asset to our clinic, but he was trained with a public health perspective on providing dental care, and the community outreach he was able to do proved valuable to the wellbeing of our community.

This bill is being proposed because dentistry in the United States has a poor record of providing access to care for those in need of it most. Dental Therapists have a proven track record worldwide, and the states that have adopted legislation to allow licensure of these dental providers are already showing improvement on a variety of metrics. I hope Oregon can continue the momentum of states choosing to better provide health services for their people.

Sincerely,

Joseph Churchill, DDS
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