

As a pediatric dentist, I understand that this proposed bill can help to address the ongoing concerns to provide improved access to care for children and adults. In reviewing this bill, however, there are multiple areas of concern that require further investigation and discussion. Under this bill, the scope of practice, education requirement and supervision are highly disturbing to me as a practicing pediatric dentist.

In order to safely and effectively provide dental care to children, I underwent 4 years of undergraduate education, 4 years of dental school training, 1 year of additional adult dentistry training and 2 years of pediatric dentistry training to best learn the biology, diagnosis and clinical skills required to oversee a child's oral health.

Many of the allowed procedures in this bill are not only irreversible, but can have lasting impacts on a child's mental and physical well-being. By allowing dental therapists a shortened and unaccredited education pathway to licensing with a wide scope of practice, to include CHILDREN can be detrimental. A pediatric dentist alone, requires an additional 24 months of post doctoral didactic and clinical training to properly oversee and manage the oral health of a child with safe and effective skills. By allowing dental therapists to complete irreversible procedures on children under general supervision, where a dentist is not on site to supervise or manage, can not only open opportunities for adverse events or situations can occur, but can cause long term harm to a child. For those reasons, I strongly oppose this bill that clearly does not properly consider the safety of children first.