

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 441, which aims to increase the recruitment and retention of dental care providers in the state of Oregon. This bill offers a comprehensive approach to addressing the shortage of dental care providers in the state, and I believe it will have a positive impact on the oral health of Oregonians.

The bill establishes a dental care provider incentive grant program within the Oregon Health Authority and directs the authority to increase incentives available to dentists. Additionally, the bill directs the State Workforce and Talent Development Board to create and maintain a dental assistant training module and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to award grants to community colleges to support training programs for dental assistants and dental hygienists. The Department of Education will also provide funding to public schools for the development of educational programming on dental care provider professions for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

I strongly believe that this bill will help address the shortage of dental care providers in the state, particularly in rural and underserved communities. The incentives for dentists, training opportunities for dental assistants, and educational programming for students will not only increase the number of dental care providers in the state, but will also encourage young people to pursue careers in this field.

In conclusion, I urge you to support Senate Bill 441. This bill represents a positive step forward in ensuring that all Oregonians have access to quality dental care and I believe it will have a positive impact on the oral health of our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Devon Lawson-McCourt*

Vida, Oregon

