

Submitter: Lynn Murray  
On Behalf Of: Self  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure: HB2996

First of all this bill is incorrectly worded as the exam they speak of is not a "proficiency" exam it is the "Radiation Health and Safety" exam, and it assesses just that; if someone understands how to take radiographs safely.

As a dental professional for a very long time I can tell you that the utilization of radiologic techniques is an essential tool in the diagnosis of dental disease. However, I don't need to tell you that used inappropriately ionizing radiation can be harmful to both patients and those who expose patients.

There is only one safeguard in Oregon to determine if a radiographer is competent and understands the risks, proper dosage, cumulative nature, and long-term harmful effects of radiation on human tissues. Which is the National Board examination that almost all states use as the determinate for an applicant's ability to safely utilize radiographic techniques to image oral tissues. This examination is the aptly named, the Radiation Health and Safety exam. The content of the examination is written by content experts, updated regularly, and provided by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB).

It concerns me greatly that HB 2996 would remove this last radiation safeguard in Oregon. (The requirement that applicants take a hands-on course to learn how to place image receptors in the mouth to achieve diagnostic images was removed a while ago, so now assistants who are trained on-the-job learn by trial and error, by taking x-rays on patients.)

If this last safeguard is removed there will be no radiology requirements in Oregon. Someone with no knowledge of radiation, radiation safety, or skill in taking radiographs can be asked to expose patients to ionizing radiation.

The removal of the exam as a requirement would benefit no one, but the harmful outcomes could affect many Oregonians for their lifetime.

Please defend Oregonians' safety and don't allow the only protection to radiation over-exposure in dentistry be removed!