

Submitter: Sara Hill

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2996

While the known radiation dosages have declined due to the advent of digital dentistry, understanding safe radiography and ALARA (As Low as Reasonably Achievable) are still critical to providing safe patient care. And not all dental practices use digital radiography. Without standardized assessment, there is no way to know the dentist is adequately training the assistant in these principles nor ensuring they follow them. This is especially true considering most dentists are not present when their assistants take radiographs on patients. Additionally, most dentists do not take their own radiographs in practice, and like most skills, when you do not use it frequently, your efficacy is reduced. Which makes me wonder will the dentist really be training the assistants or will this be delegated to other assistants? Taking diagnostic radiographs is a skill that requires a lot of direction and practice. How are we protecting the public as oral healthcare providers if we approve this? How will this benefit the public?

Further, taking an exam through DANB is required in other states. Removing this requirement limits the ability of the dental assistant to remain gainfully employed if moving to another state.

In summary, passing this bill :

Increases health risks for patients and dental assistants, alike

Waters down the quality of care received by patients

Devalues the dental assisting profession

Lowers respect for the profession

Could reduce pay and opportunities for dental assistants