

April 18, 2023

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

As a dentist, I am writing with an urgent message to ask you to support the two dental assistant workforce bills - HB 2996A & HB 3223A - referred to your committee and urge you to pass both these bills out of the committee and to the Senate Floor for a vote.

For the past decade, Oregon has struggled with workforce shortages in the healthcare sector. With long hours and higher burnout, I saw some colleagues leave the field of dentistry entirely – most of these colleagues were dental assistants at the federally qualified health center where I work. These departures significantly reduced the number of underserved patients that we were able to care for. Of course, the pandemic has only exacerbated this crisis.

The Oregon Legislature has an opportunity to address this key issue this session. Rep. Hai Pham and Rep. Cyrus Javadi have brought forward two bills that will reduce barriers for individuals seeking to enter the dental assistant field by removing the costly third-party written tests required for certification.

These written exams would be replaced with hands-on clinical training and other alternative pathways, which provide better assessments of clinical proficiency, while ensuring patient safety.

HB 2996A & HB 3223A passed the House Behavioral Health & Health Care Committee with unanimous support and the House Floor with broad, bipartisan support.

That is why I am urging you to support HB 2996A & HB 3223A this session.

Please support our oral health professionals and ensure that dental assistants across our state, and work within the full scope of their abilities to get Oregonians the oral healthcare they need!

Sincerely,



Alayna Schoblaske, DMD  
Medford, OR 97504