

Submitter: Amanda Olson

On Behalf Of: Myself

Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure: HB2996

I am writing in opposition to HB2996 as a student, a patient, and future healthcare worker. As a current student of radiographic technology at PCC I fully support the requirement of anyone who is administering radiation to have comprehensive education and proven competency before being able to expose patients. It is important for the dental assistant to understand the radiation effects and protections for their patients as well as themselves. Yes, dental radiographs are small doses, but over time, the exposure to staff can build. Dental assistants need to be proficient and prove proficiency in proper positioning, critique, and exposure.

As a patient, I expect every healthcare provider to be an expert in their area. If a dental assistant is tasked with taking my dental x-rays, I expect them to know how to position me and how to protect me.

As someone who has worked in a dental office, I understand first-hand how the industry and patients are being affected by a lack of qualified staff, but this issue does not mean we can reduce requirements for employment. The beautiful part of the Dental Assistant position is that much of it can be taught on the job. I have seen multiple Dental Assistants hired, trained, and supported with taking the required exam. It was not a barrier to employment, and many applicants were impressed with the fact that this was something the employer would support as professional development.

Lastly, if this requirement is taken away, it will become that much more difficult to ever bring back as a requirement for exposing dental patients to radiation. This will have long-term harmful effects to the industry, to patients, and to our wider communities. Please do not continue this bill any further.