

HB3223

I oppose HB 3223 which would drop the requirement for dental assistants to pass any written examination. The test shows that dental assistants understand what is done in a dental office, but also why they are doing different jobs.

I worked teaching radiography at Portland Community College for 34 years and occasionally assisted the dental program with their radiation classes. They had classes on weekends for people trained in dental offices and now they offer these classes online. In talking to the instructors, they have a high first-time pass rate. The classes teach material that can be used in any dentist's office, not just what one dentist likes. The students will have material that they can use to study for exams and also get practice tests to prepare them. If the only training is on the job this probably does not occur, they might just be shown what to do, with no materials to help study or practice testing. As noted, there are classes not just from PCC but other community colleges that are offered for people training in offices.

If there is a shortage of dental assistants, we must ask how is the profession encouraged? Do they go to high schools to promote the job? We did for our radiography program. Also, the low salary would discourage many, I hear that it is \$20.00/hour, which is what a waitress can get. As noted, there is a shortage in other states too. When I mentioned this bill to my dentist, he did not think it is a good idea.