

Submitter: Christina Lapnawan  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: HB3223

My name is Christina Lapnawan and I am a CDA. I still have concerns for the proposed 3223-A14 amendment. How will one exam encompass all the material in the Infection Control, Radiation Health and Safety, and the General Chairside Assisting Exams? The material in these areas of study are heavily significant in the dental field. If an alternative written exam is to be implemented, it still needs to hold the same standard requirement as a National Board Exam. How will one exam accomplish this?

DANB has a long history dating back to 1948 identifying the need for dental assistant certifications. It is recognized by the American Dental Association as the national certification board for dental assistants. It is represented nationwide to ensure training and educational standards have been met. The committee consists of certified dental assistants and dentists. Just like Dental Assistants, Dentists and Hygienists are required to take National Board Exams. The reasons for having the National Board Exams is to ensure everyone is practicing care at the same standard. These exams are a reliable measurement of knowledge, understanding, skills, and the ability to make informed decisions for patient care.

While I commend the Oregon Board of Dentistry in their proposal to create an advisory committee to study the dental assistant workforce shortage, I oppose the one written examination requirement. I believe education is the bridge to the future. Lowering the certification requirements reduces the dental assistants role and undercuts the profession. The National Board Examinations confirms competency on a definable scale and ensures the standards of care are high, protecting the public from harm. It is important to promote education and credentialing to elevate the dental assistant profession.