

February 17, 2025

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2676

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Javadi and Nelson and members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Linda Mann. I am the Director of Community Outreach for Capitol Dental Care (CDC). We are a Dental Care Organization (DCO) that provides care to Oregon Health Plan (OHP) beneficiaries, through contracts with Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO) across the state.

On behalf of Capitol Dental Care, I am writing to express my strong support for the interstate license compact, particularly in its potential to address critical workforce issues within the dental profession, specifically for dental hygienists. As a dental hygienist with 39 years of experience in this field, I am keenly aware of the challenges that our workforce faces, and I believe that the compact offers a transformative solution.

As you may know, dental hygiene is an essential part of preventive healthcare, yet access to care is often limited by state-specific licensure requirements. This creates barriers for dental hygienists who wish to work across state lines, reducing our ability to provide vital services to underserved and rural communities. The interstate compact offers a practical way to remove these barriers and improve workforce mobility, allowing dental hygienists to respond more flexibly to the needs of patients across multiple states.

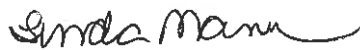
By adopting this compact, we can significantly reduce workforce shortages and enhance access to quality dental care, especially in areas that are currently underserved. For dental hygienists, this compact would streamline the process of obtaining licensure in multiple states, allowing us to pursue job opportunities in a broader geographic area. This, in turn, would contribute to higher job satisfaction, career growth, and better patient outcomes.

The compact also holds promise for addressing the ongoing workforce challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, where many dental offices struggled to maintain adequate staffing levels. By enabling dental hygienists to practice across state lines, we would be better equipped to meet the demands of a growing and mobile population, ultimately improving the overall health of our communities.

I urge you to support the interstate license compact for dental professionals. This forward-thinking measure will not only help alleviate workforce shortages but will also ensure that patients receive the timely and efficient dental care they deserve, no matter where they live.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue. I look forward to seeing your continued leadership in advancing policies that improve healthcare access and workforce mobility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Mann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Linda Mann, EPDH
Director, Community Outreach
Capitol Dental Care