



House Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE, Salem, Oregon, 97301

Subject: Significant Concern with HB 2528

Chair Prusak, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Salinas,

We are writing on behalf of the Oregon Academy of General Dentistry (OAGD) Board of Directors. We are a Board of practicing dentists throughout Oregon. . The OAGD is a component of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD): the largest organization in the world representing general dentistry and proudly serving over 40,000 members. We work diligently to advocate for effective policies that most benefit the oral health care of Oregon's residents.

On behalf of the OAGD Board, today I write to share our significant concerns on the Dental Therapy bill, HB 2528.

- Without the same level of education (6 years less education) as a practicing dentist, dental therapists will be allowed to perform treatment without in office dentist supervision.
- According to a 2005 study, "The Economic Aspects of Private Unsupervised Hygiene Practice and Its Impact on Access to Care," the overhead of maintaining a practice drives independent midlevel providers away from underserved areas.
- Data has not demonstrated that dental therapists help reduce untreated dental decay, one of the proposed benefits of having dental therapists.
- New Zealand has had a dental therapist program since the 1920s, but its percentage of children with untreated dental decay is almost identical to that of the United States, which indicates that a dental therapist model would not help to decrease untreated dental decay in children.

We would like all patients to receive the best possible oral health care and we believe that this bill will not meet that goal and will likely not solve the access to care problem this is touted to solve.

Sincerely,

Hieu Pham, DMD
OAGD Legislative Chair

Jeremy Suess, DDS
OAGD President