

4 March, 2021

I am writing in support of HB 2528

My name is Dr. Cheyanne Warren and I am the Dental Therapy Program Director at Vermont Technical College. I have spent the last four years examining the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Standards for dental therapy and thoughtfully researching and designing a curriculum to meet these standards and our State laws. Much like Oregon, we have been so fortunate to begin this process after the development of the CODA standards. I fully support the Dental Therapy Bill and I believe that any Oral Health professional who truly examines the CODA standards, understands the required training, has worked with a dental therapist and understands the scope and limitations would also fully support this bill. If one truly understands the implementation, utilization, scope and training they have no valid argument against the profession or training, but rather their arguments are fear-based with worry that insurance companies may further reduce payments for overlapping services and over a perceived potential competition for employment opportunities and patients.

CODA has set the standards for all dental education in this country. The argument against this professional's education and training is to argue against the same standards by which all dentists, specialists and dental hygienists have been judged.

Dentists once vehemently opposed the profession and scope of dental hygiene. We have improved the oral and overall health of many more patients because we added a trained dental professional to our team who not only is able to focus on prevention but facilitates our ability to increase our scope and training. The dental therapist is a highly trained member of the oral health care team that will only further our ability to contribute to a patient's oral and overall health. They will also facilitate an increase in a practice's ability to reach alternative practice settings, underserved populations and communities which I would argue would only add to a dental practice's patient pool.

Dental access is a multifaceted problem and there is a need for multiple solutions. Supporting and implementing dental therapy will help provide the framework for positive change and outcomes in oral health and oral health access. Future attention should focus on insurance reimbursement issues, cost of education for all oral health professionals, practicing to the maximum extent of one's scope, recruiting from communities and populations in need and treating oral health and disease as we would any other medical condition. Dental therapy has already made a positive impact towards all of these issues and passing HB 2528 will only further this positive impact in Oregon.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions.

Respectfully,

Cheyanne E. Warren, DDS, MS

Dental Therapy Program Director