

To: Senate Health Care Committee
Measure: HB 2996A & HB 3223A
Position: Support

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

My name is Renée Weichel, I'm a dentist and am submitting written testimony in strong support of HB 2996A and HB 3223A.

For the past decade, Oregon has struggled with workforce shortages in the healthcare sector. With long hours and higher burnout, many of our colleagues left the field entirely, leading to clinics struggling to keep up with the high demand for medical care. Unfortunately, the pandemic has only exacerbated this crisis.

The Oregon Legislature has an opportunity to address this key issue this session. Rep. Hai Pham and Rep. Cyrus Javadi have brought forward two bills that will reduce barriers for individuals seeking to enter the dental assistant field by removing the costly third-party written tests required for certification.

These written exams would be replaced with hands-on clinical training and other alternative pathways, which provide better assessments of clinical proficiency, while also ensuring patient safety.

HB 2996A & HB 3223A passed the House Behavioral Health & Health Care Committee with unanimous support and the House Floor with broad, bipartisan support.

That is why I am urging you to support HB 2996A & HB 3223A this session.

Please support our oral health professionals and ensure that dental assistants across our state can work within the full scope of their abilities to get Oregonians the oral healthcare they need!

Sincerely,

Renée Weichel
Tualatin, OR