

Subject: **Support dental assistants. Oppose HB 3223.**

I am a faculty member at Lane Community College in Eugene, OR, and I am opposed to House Bill 3223. This bill will lower the standard for dental assistant certifications and undermine the dental assisting profession. I have personally taught classes which included students from our dental program, and they are without a doubt dedicated and disciplined learners. Their program is rigorous and it produces dental assistants who meet quality standards and have the background knowledge necessary to contribute to the dental team.

This bill weakens the dental assisting certifications in Oregon and dismantles the career ladder. As a voting citizen of this state, I want to know that the individuals performing my healthcare procedures have been certified to have the required knowledge **and** skills to proceed in their profession.

The latest bill amendments will do nothing to address the current workforce shortage, and create significant barriers for any provider to offer an accepted written exam.

Dental assistants are critical members of the dental team and the duties they perform require specialized knowledge. Lowering the certification standard minimizes the value of their role in the practice and undercuts the profession, which will lead to higher turnover rates and even greater workforce shortages, while putting patients at risk.

I oppose House Bill 3223 and do not support it moving forward.

Thank you for your careful consideration of what is best for the health of Oregonians and the dental assisting profession.

Sincerely,

Peggy Oberstaller