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Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill (AB) 749

Representative Mary Felzkowski

Assembly Committee on Health

January 25, 2018

Good morning members of the Assembly Committee on Health, and thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of Assembly Bill (AB) 749.

Many medical professions employ several levels of providers in order to allow each to practice at their highest level of training. Examples of these include Advance Practice Nurses and Physician Assistants, among others. Our legislation will create a new provider level within the dentistry industry called Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDAs).

Under the current dentistry profession in Wisconsin, the dentist is assisted by two other members of the care team, dental assistants and dental hygienists. Dental assistants are not licensed by the state and have a limited scope on the procedures they are able to perform. They are often certified by the Dental Assisting National Board, but this is not required. Hygienists have more training, often graduating from one of the many excellent programs run by our tech colleges, and are allowed to perform more procedures. They are licensed by, and have representation on, the Dentistry Examining Board.

Over twenty states, as well as the military, currently allow EFDAs as another kind of dental practitioner. EFDAs have training and education requirements, are licensed members of the dental team, and work under the supervision of the dentist. They can perform functions including completing restorations, taking impressions, and providing sealants. An EFDA can be incredibly useful in taking care of patients who are scheduled for standard visits and do not require intense or comprehensive care. In other states, it is common for assistants and hygienists to also become certified EFDAs, which can often be done at tech colleges with existing dental hygiene programs like those in Wisconsin.

EFDAs have proven to allow dental offices to be more efficient and to see more patients. Efficiency will be crucial as we work to improve access to oral health care for all Wisconsinites. While EFDAs are by no means the solution to the access issue, they are one piece in a series of actions that should be taken.

Thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions.



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: January 25, 2018
RE: Testimony on 2017 Assembly Bill 749
TO: The Assembly Committee on Health
FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

Thanks to Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the committee for allowing me to present written testimony on Assembly Bill 749 (AB 749), which paves the way for a new kind of dental practitioner in Wisconsin, the Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary (EFDA).

Our state currently recognizes dentists, dental assistants, and dental hygienists as dentistry practitioners. By creating a certification for EFDAs, Wisconsin would join twenty other states and the military who recognize the need for this type of professional, whose level of expertise would lie between assistants and hygienists. Under this bill, EFDAs would be able to provide the following types of care to patients:

- 1) placing and finishing restoration material after a dentist removes tooth decay;
- 2) applying sealants;
- 3) coronal polishing;
- 4) impressions;
- 5) temporizations;
- 6) packing cord;
- 7) removing cement from crowns;
- 8) adjusting dentures and other removable oral appliances;
- 9) removing sutures and dressings; and
- 10) applying topical fluoride, fluoride varnish, or similar dental topical agent.

This bill creates two different pathways for a dental assistant to become an EFDA. The applicant may either practice 1,000 hours and hold a certified dental assistant credential issued by the Dental Assisting National Board or practice 2,000 hours verified by a supervising licensed dentist. All applicants must demonstrate that they have completed at least 70 hours of classroom instruction for EFDAs, and must be proficient in CPR. An EFDA may only complete assigned dental procedures if the dentists who delegates these duties remains on the premises.

By enabling qualified EFDAs to perform standard functions in a supervised environment, we can alleviate some of the patient load currently born by dentists and dental hygienists, allowing these professionals to focus on more intense or specialized cases. This increased efficiency is especially important in more rural parts of the state where these professionals are in shorter supply.

I ask that you join me in supporting this bill.

WISCONSIN DENTAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION

January 25, 2018

TO: Representative Joe Sanfelippo, Chair and Members of the
Assembly Committee on Health-



FROM: The Wisconsin Dental Hygienists' Association – Board of Directors (WI-DHA BOD) – Jennifer
Martinson – President

RE: Assembly Bill 749 – Certification of Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDA) and Granting Rule-
Making Authority

Thank you Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the Assembly Health committee for allowing the Wisconsin Dental Hygienists' Association (WI-DHA) to submit testimony on Assembly Bill 749 relating to Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDA). Initially, we had concerns centered on specific dental procedures and details about how the EFDA would be educated. We raised these concerns with the author of the Bill, Representative Mary Felzkowski and representatives from the Wisconsin Dental Association (WDA). After several meetings, our concerns were addressed in an amendment which I believe is, or will soon be available to members of this committee. As a result, WI-DHA now supports the Bill with the agreed upon amendment.

WI-DHA views the EFDA proposal as a mechanism by which the practice of dentistry can be made more efficient and productive. Additionally, adding EFDA's to the dental team and official recognition of their credentials is a step forward for our dental assistant professional colleagues. The proposal is in keeping with the American Dental Hygienists' Association policy statements recognizing all members of the dental team should be educated appropriately and according to the highest professional standards.

EFDA's should be regulated in order to assure patient safety and accountability to the public, and that is why we support AB 749 and ask that each of you do as well.

Thank you again Chairman Sanfelippo and members of the committee for the opportunity to present testimony at today's public hearing.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Martinson, RDH – WI-DHA President



January 25, 2018

Representative Joe Sanfelippo
PO Box 8953
State Capitol Room 306 North
Madison, WI 53708

Representative Sanfelippo,

As the associate director at Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin (Alliance) I am reaching out to share our thoughts regarding Senate Bill 635 / Assembly Bill 749 pertaining to certifying expanded function dental auxiliaries (EFDA). This bill has a public hearing scheduled in the Assembly Committee on Health on January 25, 2018.

The Alliance has worked to improve access to oral health services in Wisconsin for more than 20 years. The Alliance also leads and manages the Wisconsin Oral Health Coalition. With the recently introduced amendments by Representative Felzkowski the Alliance is supportive of this legislation. We have worked with the Wisconsin Dental Association on proposing these amendments and appreciate their willingness to collaborate with our organization and others to arrive at a bill that ensures these providers will complete an accredited training program. This provision was critical to include as it ensures the safety of the public and that EFDAs are providing high quality care. We appreciate the legislature's dedication to improving oral health in Wisconsin and adding this workforce model will increase efficiency in our current system.

If you have questions regarding our position on this bill or questions about oral health in general we would be happy to serve as a resource in the future. I can be reached at (414) 337-4562 or mcrespin@chw.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Crespin".

Matt Crespin, MPH, RDH
Associate Director

Cc: Representative Felzkowski
Senator Testin
Assembly Committee on Health