

Approved: 3-15-99
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE.

The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chairman, Senator Salmans, at 10:00 a.m. on March 9, 1999 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Emalene Correll, Legislative Research Department
Norman Furse, Revisor of Statutes
JoAnn Bunten, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Kevin Robertson, Executive Director, Kansas Dental Association
Sarasue Henderlong, Kansas Dental Hygienists Assn.

Others attending: See attached list

Hearing on: HB 2254 - Dental Hygienists examinations and refresher courses

Kevin Robertson, Executive Director, Kansas Dental Association, testified before the Committee in support of **HB 2254**. Passage of **HB 2254** would authorize the Kansas Dental Board to allow an applicant for a license as a dental hygienist who is returning to active practice after retirement or a period of disability, as an alternative to having to take an examination, to successfully complete a refresher course in an approved dental hygiene school. The bill would also require the Board to accept clinical board results for graduates of approved dental hygiene schools from nationally recognized regional dental hygiene testing agencies and from individual state dental hygiene licensing authorities in lieu of an examination given or approved by the Board. Mr. Robertson noted that the bill was the result of efforts of the Dental Hygienist Training Committee, and that the Kansas Dental Association believes this bill will be an appealing option to many who have stopped practicing and might be considering continuing their dental hygiene profession. The completion of a refresher course conducted by an approved dental hygiene program would also give dental hygienists a better opportunity and instructional support to brush-up on their manual dexterity skills and latest practice procedures in an educational rather than self-study setting as noted in his written testimony. (Attachment 1)

Sarasue Henderlong, member of the Kansas Dental Hygienists Association, also testified in support of the bill noting that **HB 2254** addresses the shortage of dental hygienists in Kansas by providing greater access to dental hygiene applicants from across the United States who are relocating to Kansas. The laws governing licensure in Kansas have been so restrictive, in regard to specific examination testing after graduating from an accredited dental hygiene program, that it has been a deterrent for registered dental hygienists to obtain yet another license when they have relocated due to his/her spouse's employment situation. (Attachment 2)

There were no opponents to the bill.

After Committee discussion on the bill, Senator Steineger made a motion that the Committee recommend **HB 2254** favorably for passage, and the bill be placed on the consent calendar, seconded by Senator Bleeker. The motion carried.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 1999.



March 9, 1999

KANSAS DENTAL ASSOCIATION

To: Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

From: Kevin J. Robertson, CAE
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin', is written over the printed name and title.

RE: HB 2254, allowing dental hygienists to take a refresher course for relicensure

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, I am Kevin Robertson Executive Director of the Kansas Dental Association, which consists of approximately 1,000 members, or 80% of Kansas' practicing dentists.

I am here today to testify in **support HB 2254**

I am sure all of you remember the dental bill that was passed during the 1998 Legislative Session. Above all, the 1998 bill was a result of concern by dentists regarding the number and availability of dental hygienists licensed in Kansas to assist dentists provide care to Kansans. Among other things, the 1998 dental bill called for the Kansas Dental Board, Board of Regents and the Board of Education to get together and report to the 1999 Legislature on plans to increase the number of persons in this state being trained as dental hygienists. That group became known as the Dental Hygienist Training Committee and it made eight recommendations in its final report to the Legislature. HB 2254 is one of those recommendations.

Though not an official member of the Dental Hygienist Training Committee, I attended all but one of its meetings and was given the courtesy of providing input during its deliberations. You might note that the recommendation before you today is broader than the simple charge of "how to train more dental hygienists" in Kansas. Though the Committee does address the training issue in its eight recommendations, the Committee also believed that the broader issue of increasing the number of dental hygienists licensed and practicing in Kansas was worthy of consideration.

The Kansas Dental Association supports allowing non-practicing dental hygienists the opportunity to successfully complete a refresher course, as defined by the Board, in an approved dental hygiene school before reentering the profession. The KDA believes this will be an appealing option to many who have stopped practicing and might be considering continuing their dental hygiene profession. The completion of a refresher course conducted by an approved dental hygiene program will also give dental hygienists a better opportunity and instructional support to brush-up on their manual dexterity skills and latest practice procedures in an educational rather than self-study setting.

The KDA also supports allowing reciprocity for dental hygiene clinical board exams with all state and regional testing agencies. I would note, however, that the Dental Board has already taken action to accept all exams administratively, and the statutory requirement may bind the Board in the future should a state or regional exam become unacceptable.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, if you have any questions I will be happy to answer them at this time.

5200 Huntoon
Topeka, Kansas 66604-2398
785-272-7360

Senate Public Health & Welfare
Date: 3-9-99
Attachment No. 1



THE KANSAS DENTAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUENT OF THE AMERICAN DENTAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION

300 WEST EIGHTH • THIRD FLOOR
Ph: 785/233-4512 • Fax: 785/233-2206

Kent E. Galley, J.D.

Executive Director
785-273-1864 (H)
785-233-4512 (W)
kgalley@mcgill-gaches.com

Connie L. Hiatt

President
3325 Crown Drive
Independence, KS 67301
316-331-0883 (H)
316-332-1444 (W)
connieh@horizon.hit.net

Teresa C. Higgins

President-Elect
1933-C S.W. Regency Pky.
Topeka, KS 66604
785-273-3551
geshorty@earthlink.net

Lourdes Vazquez

Corresponding Secretary

Reenie Olson

Recording Secretary

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Trustee

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March 9, 1999

Madam Chairman and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of HB 2254. My name is Sarasue Henderlong, RDH, BGS and I am a member of the Kansas Dental Hygienists' Association. I have been a registered dental hygienist for 22 years and am currently employed in Topeka, Kansas.

No doubt, many of you remember the legislation passed last year due to the shortage of hygienists in Kansas. HB 2254 addresses that shortage and proposes changes that would help remedy it. First, the Kansas Dental Board will be able to offer hygienists, returning to active practice after a period of retirement or disability, the option of successfully completing an approved refresher course in dental hygiene, or taking a complete clinical board examination. Secondly, the Kansas Dental Board would be authorized to accept clinical board examination results for graduates of accredited dental hygiene schools from all regional and individual states. The statutorily created Dental Hygiene Training Committee recommended both of these changes.

The first proposal would be of great value to hygienists returning to practice as it would allow them some flexibility in regaining their license. Currently, hygienists must take a clinical board exam to regain their license to practice. This exam itself costs \$450 plus the applicant's time and mileage to the testing sight, a hotel room for up to three nights, and the cost of getting a patient there. Total expenses often exceed \$1000. Many hygienists would consider it more productive and beneficial to sharpen their skills by taking a refresher course, rather than retaking an examination that they had already passed. A refresher course would allow contacts with several patients while the clinical board examination determines your skills on one single patient using prior skills that may have not been used for many years in some cases.

The second proposal provides for greater access to dental hygiene applicants from across the United States who are relocating to Kansas. The laws governing licensure in Kansas have been so restrictive, in regards to specific examination testing after graduating from an accredited dental hygiene program, that it has been a deterrent for registered dental hygienists to obtain yet another license who have relocated due to his/her spouse's employment situation.

Thank you for allowing me to come before you today to express the Kansas Dental Hygienists' Associations support of HB 2254.

Senate Public Health & Welfare

Date: 3-9-99
Attachment No. 2