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Senate Bill 432: Opponent Testimony

Subject: Kansas Dental Association member dentists support our Dental Practice Act 20% Rule (KSA 65-1435) and OPPOSE its repeal.

Testimony

My name is Dr. Adam Lukens, and I have been serving as the President of our Kansas Dental Association since April 2025. I am a 2008 graduate of the Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry and have owned a dental private practice in my hometown of Wichita since 2013. I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you today about the KDA's **OPPOSITION to SB 432**.

I am here today to represent our member dentists and focus on three reasons why the KDA is NOT in support of repeal of the 20% rule in the practice of dentistry here in Kansas. Our member dentists want to: 1) ensure quality of care and through dentist-patient relationships of the Kansas citizens we serve, 2) support our small businesses - not just privately owned dental practices, but also the local dental labs, suppliers, accountants, etc. - which economically support large and small communities across Kansas, and 3) continue the 20% rule as a safeguard to ensure dental practice owners maintain connection with their patients wherever a satellite practice might be located.

First and most importantly, our association member dentists have shared with me how deeply they care about the autonomy of their dentist-patient relationships. Private-equity backed franchise practices often have financial managers who compare multiple practice sites across state lines as simply excel spreadsheets showing revenues on a computer monitor. This focus on bottom-line numbers can get in the way of the dentist-patient relationships myself and our association members nurture with our patients and are so passionate about.

Second, if the 20% rule is removed, our association member dentists are concerned this will allow private equity-controlled national dental franchisers to expand unchecked and without safeguards. This will most definitely cause tax revenues that we pay to the state of Kansas under our local sole-proprietor LLC 's and small group S-Corps to be taken away from Kansas coffers and paid to who-knows-where the equity controlled dental franchises maintain their articles of organization. Personally, I'm self-employed with seven employees on payroll and I maintain all the accounting with the help of a local CPA firm. I see this as not only advantageous for local small business in general but for the health of the Kansas economy as a whole.

Lastly, with our current 20% rule in place, approximately 10% of Kansas dentists are affiliated with a DSO. This is the median for all the United States. In other words, DSOs can and do exist in Kansas at a rate equal to most states, regardless of the 20% rule being included in our Dental Practice Act.

Repeal of the 20% rule in our Dental Practice Act is NOT good for Kansans. We don't need unchecked growth of corporate dental franchises in our state. We want to maintain our small businesses in order to do our part to support the Kansas economy. And we want the freedom to treat our patients the way we feel they should best be treated. Let's keep the 20% rule in place for the citizens, our dental patients, in this great state. For the reasons stated today, as President of the Kansas Dental Association, I oppose SB 432.

Thank you,

Adam F. Lukens, D.D.S.