

Chairman Hawkins and Members of the Committee:

As a Registered Dental Hygienist who has been practicing in public health for the past seven years, I believe the Registered Dental Practitioner would be a valuable asset to the dental team. I am speaking as someone who sees on a daily basis the profound impact oral disease can have on an individual's quality of life. I work as a dental hygienist who has an expanded permit and provides dental services in a school based setting. It is frustrating to see urgent needs go unmet because of inability to access a dentist due to lack of transportation, finances, and enough Medicaid providers. It is unfortunate as a public health dental hygienist I have to let a child walk away from me at a preventive appointment with caries or infection and just hope the parent or guardian gets the child to a dentist as soon as possible.

Registered Dental Hygienists are nationally board certified and possess clinical skills to deliver a broader scope of services with the supervision of a dentist. I see the RDP as a way to provide cost-effective care and greatly increase access to care for adults and children across Kansas. As mid-levels in other medical fields, the RDP will serve in a capacity similar to that of nurse practitioners and physicians assistants. It is time Kansas stop relying on charity and pro-bono services in an attempt to increase access to care. Please support House Bill 2079.

Sincerely,

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