



February 24, 2015

Testimony in Support of HB 2079 – Registered Dental Practitioners

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.

On behalf of thousands of Americans for Prosperity members across Kansas, thank you for this opportunity to voice our support for House Bill 2079.

We have a shortage of dentists in many parts of Kansas, and a severe shortage of dentists willing to accept Medicaid. At the same time, we have untapped talent in our pool of Kansas dental assistants and hygienists who are willing to step up to help.

Senate Bill 49 will create a new mid-level provider model in which Dental Hygienists, with advanced training, could become Registered Dental Practitioners (RDP). They would provide basic dental care under dentist supervision.

Through the RDP model, we can help ensure every Kansan has access to routine, quality dental care, without driving to the next county or waiting weeks to get an appointment.

Registered Dental Practitioners will do what physician assistants and nurse practitioners have already done to address the medical workforce shortage. Like mid-level medical providers, RDPs would work under the supervision of a Dentist.

A study by the Pew Charitable Trust indicates that RDPs would allow dentists to expand their practices, and make dental practices more profitable. The American Dental Association and others suggest that Registered Dental Practitioners do not fit the business model of solo dental practices. Dentists would have the freedom, based on their own preference and practice model, to

add an RDP to their team, or not. Nothing in this bill would require a dentist to hire or supervise a Registered Dental Practitioner.

It is time to move forward. Americans for Prosperity-Kansas supports this step forward for providing new opportunities for individuals to maximize their own potential, while improving the availability and quality of dental care in Kansas.

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