

February 14, 2017

Christina Thomas
Mission, KS
House Bill 2139
House Health and Human Services Committee

Chairman Hawkins and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christina Thomas, and I live in Mission, Kansas. I am a recent graduate of a dental hygiene program in Kansas City. I was a general dentist in India and moved to the United States in 2012. I thank the committee for the opportunity to submit my testimony in support of House Bill 2139.

Dental therapists are specially trained mid-level dental providers with a broad range of dental skill sets, which include preventive and limited restorative services. I support dental therapy because it will give me the opportunity to fully utilize my knowledge and experience as a dentist to help improve the oral and general health of Kansans. It is a complex and time-consuming process for foreign dentists to get licensed in the United States. I also support dental therapy because Kansas is in great demand for dental professionals; the majority of Kansas counties face a dental workforce shortage. Dental therapists will provide quality health care under the supervision of dentists.

I strongly believe that dental therapy would be a solution to the access to dental care issues in Kansas. I encourage the committee to support allowing dental therapists to practice in Kansas, and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.