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House Bill 2139
House Health and Human Services Committee

I am an instructor at Concorde Career College in Kansas City. I have been a dental hygienist for 15 years. I graduated from UMKC. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 2139.

Establishing dental therapists will be an invaluable service to Kansans. Adding this new provider will allow dentists to be able to see more patients, utilizing his/her advanced knowledge and skills. Whereby the dental therapists provide routine care. This is a cost-saving assurance that enables dental providers to give access to care to the underserved. The Kansas economy will grow as new jobs are created. Dental therapists will be trained in Kansas, work in Kansas, working FOR Kansans. They will work in schools, nursing homes, safety-net clinics, and underserved areas. They will avail Kansas communities to high-quality care while stretching funding further to increase the number of patients served. Patients with KanCare insurance can be served by making it more cost effective for private dental practices.

Dental therapy education programs will be accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, the same agency that certifies dental schools. They will be held to the same high standards as dentists and dental hygienists. They will be well-paid professionals, earning between \$60,000 and \$80,000 annually.

Creating jobs and growing the Kansas economy, meeting the need of the underserved, and saving money are reason enough to support allowing dental therapists to practice in Kansas. I highly encourage the committee to support this legislation.

Thank you Chairman Hawkins and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify.

Tamsie Seastrand RDH