



March 14, 2018

Written Proponent Testimony – SB 312

Thank you, Chairman Hawkins and members of the committee. On behalf of the thousands of Americans for Prosperity activists across Kansas, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony supporting SB 312.

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 an untapped talent pool of Kansas dental assistants and hygienists who are willing to step up to help.

Through a Dental Therapist model, we can move toward ensuring that every Kansan has access to quality routine dental care without waiting weeks to get an appointment. These Dental Therapists could address the dental workforce shortage in much the same way as physician assistants and nurse practitioners do in the medical setting.

In addition to the added care benefits, a study by the Pew Charitable Trusts indicates that Dental Therapists would allow dentists to expand their practices, and make dental practices more profitable. Dentists would have the freedom, based on their own preferences and practice mode, to add a Dental Therapist to their team. Allowing Dental Therapists to perform routine procedures, like drilling and filling cavities, would allow dentists to focus on more complicated procedures and increase the number of patients they could treat in a day.

Thank you for addressing the critical issue of providing expanded dental care for Kansans.

Jeff Glendening
Kansas State Director
Americans for Prosperity