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Testimony to support HB 2453

House Health and Human Services Committee

**Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact.** I have been a practicing dentist for almost 30 years, currently at a private practice with my husband in Overland Park and a dental hygiene school clinic in Kansas City.

As an employer, I continue to face **workforce shortage** issues. One unnecessary hurdle for employment is the redundancy of licensure applications. With a practice near the state line, we employ people who live in both Kansas and Missouri. My most recently hired dental hygienist, moved to Kansas after living and practicing in mid-Missouri. His ability to practice was delayed by almost 2 months due to the three-step licensure process in Kansas. If the compact had been in place, this would have been avoided and he could have quickly transitioned to employment.

As an educator, I see first-hand with my students, the time and expense associated with the licensure process. This is a barrier to many and if they have to choose only one state to be licensed in, they often select the least expensive and less cumbersome choice if they are living in the Kansas City metro. Currently Kansas is more expensive than Missouri and the multi-step process required of Kansas makes the ability to be licensed in Missouri more rapid. As a new graduate with bills to pay, this makes Missouri seem **more attractive for employment**. With the Compact in place, a Kansas license could be attained quickly and easily.

One of the main complaints regarding licensure in Kansas by both dentists and registered dental hygienists is the timeline. Those applying to Missouri usually are able to attain their license within two weeks of graduation whereas in Kansas it takes up to two months. The Kansas Dental Board is a small organization that is responsible for many important administrative tasks. By adopting the Compact, the burden of many tasks regarding investigation or verification could be reduced. Not only would this benefit the applicants in terms processing time, it could prove to be a **cost reduction** mechanism for the Dental Board.