

April 22, 2024

Senator Kari Dziedzic  
Chair, Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Committee  
3113 Minnesota Senate Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Dziedzic and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Dental Association, I express our organization's support for the dental provisions contained within SF2394 and SF4570, as described below.

### **Dental Assistant Licensure by Credentials**

SF4570, Article 4, Section 2, addresses the growing workforce shortage of dental assistants. Current law allows for out of state dental assistants to apply for licensure based on their credentials in lieu of completing a board-approved dental assisting program if the applicant meets certain criteria. One criterion is that the applicant must have graduated from a dental assisting program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) and be certified by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB).

This provision allows dental assistants to apply for licensure by credentials regardless of whether they graduated from a CODA accredited program, so long as they are certified by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB). Applicants of CODA accredited programs who are not certified by DANB would also be eligible to apply for licensure. Applicants would still be required to demonstrate that the non-CODA program is comparable to instate CODA programs and meets all other Board of Dentistry requirements.

Article 4, Section 2, simply expands the applicant pool to provide Minnesota with more candidates that may be qualified for licensure. It also more clearly articulates the Board of Dentistry's authority to recognize out of state non-CODA accredited dental assisting programs for those seeking licensure by credentials.

### **Dentist and Dental Hygienist Licensure Compact**

SF2394, Article 6, allows Minnesota to become a member of the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Licensure Compact. Participating in the compact will help improve Minnesota's dental workforce challenges and improve patient access to care. Recent data obtained within our membership indicate that over two-thirds of dentists in Minnesota have found it to be "extremely challenging" or "very challenging" to hire dental hygienists. Patient wait times have increased as a direct consequence of staffing shortages. Minnesota is in great need of dental hygienists and dentists to provide quality and efficient patient care.

Should Minnesota become a member state, patients in bordering communities can enjoy a greater continuity of care. It would also allow dentists and hygienists to work across state lines and expands the potential use of teledentistry. The compact will also allow these states to work collaboratively to ensure that public safety is maintained.

In addition to our organization, this compact is supported by the Minnesota Board of Dentistry, the Minnesota Dental Hygienists Association, and the Association for Dental Support Organizations.

### **Specialty Dentist Licensure Modifications**

SF4570, Article 4, Section 1, removes paragraph (e) from Minnesota Statute 150A.06, subdivision 1c., which states that a specialty dentist holding a general dental license is limited to practicing in their designated specialty area if they announced a limitation of practice. Removing this restriction would allow a specialty dentist to provide general dentist services outside their specialty area, providing the ability for the dentist to treat a greater number of patients and increasing access to care.

The MDA appreciates your consideration of both bills and asks for your support. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Dan Murphy, MPP  
Director of Government Affairs  
[dmurphy@mndental.org](mailto:dmurphy@mndental.org)  
612-767-4255

### ***About the Minnesota Dental Association***

*The Minnesota Dental Association is the voice of dentistry in Minnesota, representing practicing dentists. It is committed to the highest standards of oral health and access to care for all Minnesotans. Learn more at: [www.mndental.org](http://www.mndental.org).*