



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

**Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners
Spring Grove Hospital Center
Benjamin Rush Building
55 Wade Avenue/Tulip Drive
Catonsville, Maryland 21228**

February 10, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: Senate Bill 465-Maryland Medical Assistance Programs-Dental Providers and Dental Students-Reimbursement – Letter of Concern

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners is submitting this letter of concern for Senate Bill (SB) 465-Maryland Medical Assistance Programs-Dental Providers and Dental Students-Reimbursement. The bill provides that the Department of Health shall reimburse a dental provider for services rendered by a student of dentistry who is engaged in an educational program at a school of dentistry and providing services under the supervision of a licensed dentist.

The Board is concerned for a number of reasons. First, the bill does not provide for any academic requirements for the student of dentistry. The student could be a first-year or second-year student that has no clinical experience. Second, although the student must work under the “supervision” of a dentist, the level of supervision is not specified. For example, under the present law a dental hygienist may work under the “general supervision” of a licensed dentist where the dentist makes an entry in the chart describing the duties that the dental hygienist may perform in the dentist’s absence, typically a prophylaxis, but the dentist is not on the premises. Under the bill, a first-year or second-year dental student would be allowed to work on a patient without the dentist on the premises. In fact, no student of dentistry, regardless of their year of education, should be allowed to treat a patient without a dentist on the premises who is directly supervising any work performed by the student. Third, there are no qualifications required of the supervising dentist. The dentist may themselves lack any real experience in treating patients. Finally, the Board has no jurisdiction over dental students. If the student is not competent or demonstrates a lack of basic skills resulting in injury to the patient, the Board is powerless to take any action against the student.

For these reasons, the Dental Board submits this letter of concern and asks that the committee issue an unfavorable report.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at 301-367-2352, jgoldsm217@comcast.net, or Dr. Arpana Verma, the Board's Legislative Committee Chair at 240-498-8159, asverma93@gmail.com. In addition, the Board's Executive Director, Mr. Frank McLaughlin may be reached at 443-878-5253, frank.mclaughlin@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

James P. Goldsmith, D.M.D.

James P. Goldsmith, D.M.D.
Board President

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this letter of concern does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the administration.