



HB 471 – State Board of Dental Examiners – Dental Specialization – Requirements

HB 471 is not a complicated bill. For more than 40 years the Maryland Dentistry Act has delegated to the State Board of Dental Examiners the authority to determine areas of dental specialties, and if a licensed dentist requests, to determine whether the licensee qualifies for Board identification as a specialist. Since it first was enacted this section permissibly authorized the Maryland Board to approve any area of dental specialty recognized by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, a Commission under the American Dental Association (ADA).

In late, 2016, the Board of Trustees of the ADA charged its Task Force on Specialty and Specialty Certifying Board Recognition to evaluate the process and criteria by which specialties and specialty certifying boards are recognized. This was prompted in part by the concerns about anti-trust implications of the certifying body being an ADA Commission. The establishment of the National Commission on Recognition of Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards was the result.

The National Commission is independent in its decision-making process for the recognition of dental specialties and certifying boards, ensuring that bias and conflicts of interest are avoided. Establishing such a Commission reduces potential or perceived bias or conflict of interest in the decision-making process for recognizing dental specialties. The Commission is intended to emulate the processes for recognition of specialties and certifying boards in other health professions. The Commission's Membership consists of 21 members: 10 dental specialists, 10 general dentists, and one consumer member.

However, this change has necessitated that §§4-302 and 4-504 of the Maryland Dentistry Act be amended. Thus, all HB 471 does is change the entity to which the State Board is to refer in making decisions concerning dental specialties.

The Maryland State Dental Association Supports HB 471 and Requests that it Receive a Favorable Committee Vote.

**Submitted by
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February 18, 2020**