



Opposition to HB 1030 - State Board of Dental Examiners – Membership – Nomination and Appointment Process

Respectfully Submitted by Daniel T. Doherty, Jr. on behalf of The Maryland State Dental Association

The Maryland State Dental Association (MSDA) strongly opposes HB 1030 which proposes to replace the current nomination and appointment process that has been in place for years, and which has worked effectively. Under the current provisions of the Act, when there is a vacancy of a dentist member on the State Board of Dental Examiners (SBDE) the Board sends a solicitation for nominations to each dentist licensed by the Board, and to each State dental organization affiliated with a national dental organization. One nomination may be submitted to the Board for each vacancy by each qualifying State dental organization, and by a petition supported by at least 15 licensed dentists supporting a particular dentist's nomination. The Board then conducts a balloting process whereby each licensed dentist is notified of the nominees, and each may vote for one dentist for each vacancy. Once the voting is completed, all nominees are included on a list showing the number of votes each received, and the entire list is submitted to the Governor.

Any licensed Maryland dentist may have his or her name submitted to the Governor for appointment either by being the nominee of a qualified state dental organization, or by submitting a petition signed by at least 15 dentists supporting her or his nomination. From that list the governor makes the appointments, striving to the extent practicable to appoint members that reasonably reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, cultural and gender diversity of the State.

This appointment process allows the opportunity for any licensed dentist to be appointed by the Governor to the SBDE to a greater degree than the majority of the other Health Occupation Boards. The major strength of the process for appointment to the SBDE is the ballot requirement. Every dentist nominee's name is submitted to all licensed dentists so each has the right to vote for the nominee that each deems most qualified. In this way the Governor may include among the criteria considered the extent to which each nominee is deemed qualified by that nominee's peers.

HB 1030 would totally change this system by having all nominations by dental organizations or by petitions submitted directly to the Governor, not through the SBDE. These nominations will be received without any review by the nominee's peers, and in fact without the majority of licensed dentists even knowing what dentists are being considered for appointment. This nomination process would become a totally political one, without any review or expression of support by the dental community.

HB 1030 would do away with the compilation of all nominees by the SBDE, and the submission of those dentists for review and vote by the licensed dental community. It would replace a very functional and effective system with direct submission to the Governor of dental organization and petition nominees. Without the inclusion of peer review, the door will be opened to appointment based primarily on lobbying and political influence.

Since the current system works well, and is not broken:

The Maryland State Dental Association respectfully requests that HB 1030 be given an unfavorable report.

Respectfully Submitted
Daniel T. Doherty, Jr.
February 25, 2021