

Dear Health and Government Operations Committee:

I am Dr. Diane Romaine, Past President of the MSDA, serve as dental representative for the Maryland Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Technical Advisory Committee and for the past 27 years have practiced as a general dentist in Frostburg MD.

Over the past ten years I have advocated and testified for expansion of duties for Registered Dental Hygienists such as delivering anesthetic, which have been adopted in regulation and when translated in my dental practice, have made a positive impact on patient care and access. Sadly we have done nothing in Maryland to similarly expand the duties of Qualified Dental Assistants who are trained through the nationally accredited certification program by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) which is widely accepted across the country.

The time has come to expand Qualified Dental Assistants duties with the addition of placing dental sealants, coronal polishing, monitoring nitrous oxide and applying silver diamine fluoride under the direct supervision of a dentist. In doing this, access to care for patients will improve. How do I know? I also have a dental practice and am licensed in Pennsylvania where trained dental assistants termed Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs) are able to perform these duties and more! In rural Allegany County where we are close to the Pennsylvania border, I often see us lose assistants because they go across state lines to take advantage of higher salaries and the professional fulfillment of working at the top of their allowed duties where in Maryland though trained and examined in these duties, they are forced to put blinders on and not perform them. When we look at who suffers from these regulatory imposed limitations it is patients who could otherwise receive care. I believe these expanded duties proposed for Qualified Dental Assistants to be safe and was a member of the Maryland State Dental Association Committee which reviewed these duties with expert testimony.

I ask for your favorable report to HB968

Sincerely,

Diane D Romaine DMD MScM MAGD