

Testimony In Support of HB 1159

State Board of Dental Examiners – Dental School Faculty – Examination

Submitted by

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Before the Maryland State House of Delegates

Health & Government Affairs Committee

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In 1840, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) was founded as the first dental school in the world as the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery. Over the past 183 years, I'm pleased to say, our dental school alumni and dental students have promoted global oral health by providing quality dental care. Our UMSOD faculty and researchers are as diverse as our student population. The Doctor of Dental Surgery Class of 2026 is composed of 135 students of which, 82 are female, 15% Black, 11% Hispanic and 3 are from other countries outside of the United States. UMSOD stays relevant by attracting the best faculty in the world. Previously, that emphasis was on recruiting specialist faculty. While that is still important, quality general dental faculty is also needed. For most patients, including children, their first exposure to dentistry is via a general dentist. I personally feel that the General Dentist is the quarterback, who with discussions and mutual respect with our patients, decides when a referral to a dental specialist is needed. The global reach of educating our future dental professionals helps to eliminate barriers to seeking dental care such as language and understanding cultural differences.

HB 1159 corrects an oversight when the original law went into effect helping to recruit specialist dental faculty. For UMSOD faculty members with just the equivalent of a teaching license issued by the State Dental Board, there are various obstacles including: inability to file a dental insurance claim within the faculty practice, inability to obtain full membership in some dental organizations including the American Dental Association, and inability to register to become a Medicaid Provider in Maryland Healthy Smiles Program (via e-Prep).

Passing HB 1159 gives our dental school the ability to be competitive in recruiting top global educators. HB 1159 preserves the existing safeguards in current law that assure the licensing applicant has met the same standards as existing Maryland Licensed dentists with the exception of having graduated from a US or Canadian Dental School. Foreign trained General Dentist faculty who apply for dental licensure with the approval of our UMSOD must have completed at least one of the following additional certificates:

- 1) Certificate of Completion of a General Dental Practice Residency (GPR / 1- or 2-year programs)
- 2) Certificate of Completion an Advanced Education in General Dentistry Residency (AEGD / 1- or 2-year programs)
- 3) Board certification by the American Board of General Dentistry (A Comprehensive Examination typically used by our military dentists to advance in military rank)

The above programs are rigorous challenges for the accomplished dentist who shows advanced training well beyond 4 years of dental school. These are great aspirational accomplishments to instill in our dental students as they go out into the world to perform good deeds.

For the above reasons and those stated in my oral testimony, I ask the HB 1159 be given a favorable report.

Sincerely,

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