

SB 456 Qualifications for Maryland Dent-Care Program and Study on the Use of On-line Credentialing

FAVORABLE with Amendments

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The overall intent of the legislation continues a program that is achieving some success despite lacking the necessary funding to reach its full potential.

The language regarding the definition of licensure is of concern, the broad term LICENSE would mean every license category as eligible when in fact the proper language should be "a general license to practice dentistry or dental hygiene" so that limited license holders who are completing their training as an internationally trained dentists looking to complete the requirements to be eligible for a GENERAL LICENSE would not be eligible. In my opinion the dentists' slots should remain FULL TIME for the 3-year commitment, to motivate those dentists to establish roots in the community, treating patients and making it their long term dental home. There is more than a sufficient pool of dentists applying for this program as only 8 funded spots were available with 34 applicants. The loan forgiveness can make a large impact on the average \$300,000-400,000 student loan debt. The PART TIME status for the Dental Hygienist appears to be a reasonable request as over 90% are female and would like a work/family balance according to their prior testimony and the magnitude of student debt is much lower as the program costs range from \$22,000 to 30,000.

I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT with the amendments to hold a general license in dentistry or dental hygiene and consideration for PART TIME for Dental Hygienists. Thank You

