



## **The Maryland State Dental Association Supports SB 792 – State Board of Dental Examiners-Expanded Function Dental Assistants-Education and Reinstatement**

*Respectfully Submitted by Daniel T. Doherty, Jr. On Behalf of the Maryland State Dental Association*

In the 2022 Session, Delegate Kipke sponsored HB 968 establishing Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs), which contained provisions for the certification and regulation of these EFDAs. Establishing EFDAs, and allowing them to perform one or more of the expanded functions specified in HB 968, allows dental hygienists and dentists more time to provide more complex procedures to their patients, thus increasing the productivity of the dental team and increasing the number of patients who receive dental care. The expansion of the functions of a dental assistant makes dental assisting a more attractive profession, thus attracting more individuals to enter this health occupation, and increasing the number of dental assistants in Maryland – addressing, to an extent, the shortage of dental auxiliaries in Maryland.

Not surprisingly compromises were reached to satisfy objections raised by interested parties. Among which were limiting guidelines for the courses of study that the Board of Dental Examiners (“BDE”) may approve for certification of EFDAs. Specifically: “ BDE may not approve a course of study for an applicant to qualify as an EFDA unless it is part of (1) a U.S. Department of Labor Job Corps Dental Assisting program; (2) a dental assisting program located within an institution of postsecondary education that is accredited by an accrediting institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (ED); (3) a dental assisting program that is located within a high school and is recognized by an accrediting body recognized ED or the high school accrediting body of a State; or (4) a dental assisting program that is accredited by the Council on Dental Accreditation or a successor organization.

Unfortunately, these limitations blocked the BDE from approving courses for EFDAs that are accepted throughout the Country. Thus, among the necessary courses excluded under these provisions of HB 968 were: 1) the courses offered by the **Dale Foundation, an affiliate of the Dental Assisting National Board**, despite the fact the one of the requirements an applicant must meet is to “Have the appropriate certification from the Dental Assisting National Board; and 2) orthodontic dental assisting courses or program offered by **Trapezio Orthodontic Assisting Solutions**, which provides essential courses for the education of Orthopedic EFDAs, many of the courses are available online. Online courses are essential for dental assistants who are working and have family or other responsibilities.

SB 792 authorizes the BDE to approve courses, including when appropriate, online courses, offered by these two entities or successor entities both for initial certification and for CE course requirements. The bill also authorizes the BDE to approve CE courses offered by Dental

Professional Societies. **It is not the bill's intent to supersede existing regulations adopted by the State Board of Dental Examiners requiring in-person clinical courses and programs. Rather its intent is to assure the availability of on-line courses that the Board deems appropriate.**

Finally, the bill corrects an oversight in the 2022 HB 968, by amending the statute to provide for the requirements an EFDA, whose certification has expired, must satisfy to have the expired certification reinstated.

**For these reasons, the Maryland State Dental Association requests thar SB 792 receive a Favorable Report.**

**Submitted February 21, 2025**

**Daniel T. Doherty, Jr.,**