

Testimony Regarding Maryland House Bill 573

Dr. Doug Depew - 2/14/2025

Trapezio

Home of the Academy of Orthodontic Assisting

Honorable Members of the Maryland Legislature,

My name is Dr. Doug Depew. I am a practicing orthodontist, the founder and Academic Director of Trapezio, and the past chairman of the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) Staff Shortage Task Force. In these roles, I have gained extensive experience in developing and delivering effective, accessible, and affordable training for orthodontic team members. I have also become keenly and uniquely aware of the specific challenges orthodontic practices face in ensuring their team members receive high-quality training.

For over 20 years, Trapezio has provided standardized training for orthodontic assistants, with more than 17,000 team members trained. As a Maryland dental board-approved provider, we have helped numerous orthodontic team members in the state gain the knowledge and hands-on skills necessary to excel in their roles. Our program is also endorsed by the AAO and widely recognized by dentists and orthodontists as a trusted training resource.

Online, self-paced didactic learning provides a flexible and accessible way for orthodontic assistants to gain essential knowledge. However, we recognize that hands-on training is equally critical in developing clinical skills. That is why our program ensures that online education is coupled with hands-on training. To do so, we can facilitate hands-on training in two proven ways:

1. Partnering with the local the orthodontic association to offer periodic hands-on courses, supervised by experienced orthodontic specialists.
2. Providing structured in-office training guides to help orthodontic practices deliver hands-on instruction under doctor supervision.

Trapezio is concerned that any shift away from online learning in favor of exclusively in-person programs would significantly reduce accessibility to training. This could place an undue burden on orthodontic practices and employees, increasing both costs and time commitments while making compliance with state regulations more difficult.

I urge you to support a training model that maintains flexibility for both employers and employees while ensuring the highest standards of education for orthodontic assistants. By allowing this approach that integrates online didactic coursework with structured hands-on training, Maryland can continue to foster a well-trained orthodontic workforce that provides excellent care to its citizens.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,



D. Doug Depew, DMD, MS

KNOWLEDGE & TRAINING SOLUTIONS

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