



**The Maryland State Dental Association Supports, with Amendments, HB 849
– Maryland Commission to Study the Dental Hygienist Shortage –
Establishment**

Submitted by Daniel T. Doherty, Jr. on Behalf of The Maryland State Dental Association

The impact on patient dental care - especially the underserved - in Maryland due to the shortages of all dental auxiliaries must be addressed. These shortages have been increasing over the past 10 years, and the pandemic caused a significant increase in the lack of dental auxiliaries- not just dental hygienists, but also dental assistants, dental radiation technologists, and dental community health workers. The onset of Covid exasperated the already insufficient numbers of dental hygienists, dental assistants, and dental radiation technologists, as many chose to work in jobs from home, avoiding exposure to patients in a dental environment. A significant number of these individuals have not return to the dental office.

The Maryland State Dental Association (MSDA) supports the establishment of a Maryland Commission to study this crisis, and to develop and propose remedial recommendations. However, The MSDA strongly encourages that the scope of HB 849 be expanded to include all dental auxiliaries. Thus, MSDA proposes the adoption of the following Amendments:

Amendments to HB 849 submitted by the Maryland State Dental Association

Amendment No. 1: On page 1 in line 2 strike “Dental Hygienist” and after “Shortage” insert “Dental Auxiliaries”; in line 4-5 strike “Dental Hygienist” and after “Shortage” in line 5 insert “of Dental Auxiliaries”. In line 11 strike “hygiene” and insert “auxiliary”.

Amendment No. 2: On page 3 in line 6 strike “dental hygienist” and after “shortage” insert “of dental auxiliaries”; in lines 9 and 13 strike “hygienists” and insert “auxiliaries.”; in line 14 strike “dental hygiene” and in line 15 after “education” insert “of dental axillaries”; in line 16 strike “hygiene” and substitute “auxiliary”; and in line 18 after “support” insert “dental hygienists”, and in line 19 strike “dental hygiene” and after “opportunities” insert “for all dental auxiliaries”.

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