

MSBDE-Testimony HB373 Senate Finance Committee Sta

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LESLIE E. GRANT, DDS, MSPA
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To: Senator Pamela Beidle, Finance Committee Chair
Members, Finance Committee
From: Leslie E. Grant, DDS, MSPA
Board Member, Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners
RE: HB 373
Date: March 22, 2026

Thank you, for graciously allowing this testimony in support of House Bill 373, “State Board of Dental Examiners – Disciplinary Action and Unannounced Inspections”. My name is Dr. Leslie Grant. I am a general dentist and speech and language pathologist. Currently, I am serving in the fourth year of my second and final term on the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners. I have chaired the Board’s Infection Control and Biosafety Committee for several years, and would like to request your support of a significant semantic change this Bill offers that brings infection control language up to date and commensurate with Centers for Disease Control Guidance.

Presently, our regulations reference the term “Universal Precautions”. That term was replaced with the terminology of “Standard Precautions” several years ago. “Standard Precautions” expand the concept of protection from risks associated with disease transmission. Universal Precautions primarily included bloodborne pathogens, and focused on health care worker safety. The current terminology of “Standard Precautions” includes not only bloodborne pathogens, but also incorporates respiratory or airborne microorganism transmission as well. It expands safety protections not only to Health Care Workers, but also to patients and other contacts. The use of the term “Universal Precautions” is outdated, inappropriate and misleading. When quoting our regulations in presentations, I have had to resort to adding “Standard Precautions” in brackets, as well as an explanation to ensure the attendees are accurately informed.

I again thank the Committee for your consideration. I do support the disciplinary aspects of House Bill 373, however it was important for me to offer this clarification and explanation as to the significance of incorporating this change in language to “Standard Precautions”. I request your favorable support of House Bill 373.

HB 373- FIN - Dental Board - LOS.docx (1).pdf

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

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March 25, 2026

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: HB 373 State Board of Dental Examiners Disciplinary Action and Unannounced Inspections
Dental Board – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Finance Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners is submitting this Letter of Support for HB 373 State Board of Dental Examiners Disciplinary Action and Unannounced Inspections. The bill accomplishes two things. First, it updates the name of an existing Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publication, and adds a second publication, ensuring that the Board may move forward with enforcement proceedings, and secondly, it enables the Board to take disciplinary action against expanded function dental assistants when warranted.

I. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The stated purpose of the CDC it is to protect public health and safety in the United States by preventing, detecting, and responding to health threats. It focuses on developing and applying disease control and prevention strategies, promoting health, and ensuring the health and safety of the population, including those in dental settings. The Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, §§ 4-205 and 315 refer to “the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidelines on universal precautions.” The name has changed, and there is an additional CDC publication relevant to appropriate infection control guidelines in dental settings. The title of the publication “Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidelines on universal precautions” has been changed to “Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidelines on Standard Precautions.” The additional publication is titled “Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention’s Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings.” Both publications establish appropriate guidelines for infection control in dental settings.

The Board is concerned that an individual who might face disciplinary charges involving a violation of CDC standards might allege that since the name of the publication with which he or she is charged no longer exists, charges must be dismissed. In addition, the Board wishes to utilize the publication Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings when evaluating infection control issues in dental offices.

II. Expanded Function Dental Assistants:

Under HB 968 Health Occupations – Dental Assistants – Certification and Regulation (2022), two new dental assistant certifications were created in Maryland; general duties expanded function dental assistants and orthodontic expanded function dental assistants. HB 968 does not permit the Dental Board to take administrative action against expanded function dental assistants who violate the Board’s laws and regulations. Under HB 968 disciplinary action may only be taken against the supervising dentist. HB 573 and SB 792 State Board of Dental Examiners – Expanded Function Dental Assistants – Education and Reinstatement (2025) is silent as to disciplinary action. As a result, expanded function dental assistants may repeatedly violate the dental laws without repercussion in one or more dental offices. Under the existing laws administrative action may be taken against all other license and certificate holders; that is, dentists, dental hygienists, and dental radiation technologists. It is manifestly unfair to allow individuals who are trained in expanded function duties, and who are Dental Assisting National Board certified to lawfully escape all responsibility for bad acts. Therefore, the Board asks for the statutory authority to initiate administrative action against expanded function dental assistants when warranted.

For the foregoing reasons the Dental Board requests that HB 373 receive a favorable report.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at 202-997-2606; chiyo.alie@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this letter of support does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the administration.

Sincerely,
Chiyo Alie, D.D.S.
Chiyo Alie, D.D.S.
Board President