

**David J. Owsiany
Executive Director – Ohio Dental Association
Proponent Testimony on House Bill 317**

**Ways and Means Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
Proponent Testimony
November 14, 2017
10:00 A.M.
Room 121**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers and members of the Ohio House Ways and Means Committee –

My name is David Owsiany, and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Dental Association. As you may know, the ODA is the professional association of dentists in Ohio. We represent 70% of Ohio's practicing dentists with more than 5,300 member dentists across the state.

It is my pleasure to provide proponent testimony for House Bill 317 and AM0566, which would make dentists that provide uncompensated dental care eligible for a personal income tax deduction.

Ohio's dentists have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to improving oral health in Ohio by routinely volunteering their time and expertise to provide dental care for free or at reduced cost to those without adequate access. This legislation and AM0566 provides added incentive to care for the poor and serves as recognition of those dentists' efforts in donating their time and services.

The ODA supports the inclusion of AM0566 into House Bill 317 because it promotes expanded access to dental services for people in our state. Dental care remains the number one unmet health care need for Ohio's children and low-income adults. Racial and ethnic minority adults, those from low-income households and those without private dental insurance are less likely to have a recent dental visit than others. House Bill 317 is an opportunity to reach more Ohioans and service their unmet oral health needs. This initiative will help those without means achieve better oral health and thus decrease the need for more serious medical care among this population.

The ODA thanks Representative Ron Young for supporting AM0566 and urges the House Ways and Means Committee to accept amendment AM0566 and, with the its inclusion, favorably pass House Bill 317.