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Healthy Mouths > Healthy People > Strong Communities

January 29, 2020

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit proponent testimony today on House Bill 203.

Oral Health Ohio's strategic work focuses on improving the oral and overall health of Ohio's children and families through advocacy and education. Our work's impact means greater knowledge to create better policies, more access to oral health care and better understanding about how oral health affects overall health and the prosperity of our communities.

House Bill 203 addresses two key issues regarding the operation of mobile dental facilities, or MDFs, in the state of Ohio. By addressing these key issues in Ohio law, MDFs will be able to provide more reliable and effective dental services for Ohio families who might otherwise not be able to visit a dentist.

First, House Bill 203 requires that MDFs provide patients with information about any services and/or treatment provided, the name of the dentist providing treatment, recommendations for follow-up care and the MDFs contact information should the patient need to request a copy of their health record.

Requiring MDFs to provide this simple but essential information will help patients to achieve better health outcomes and cost-savings. For example, under the current system if a patient requires x-rays, the MDF is not required to give the patient a copy of the x-ray nor are they required to provide a copy of their health record or recommendations for follow-up treatment. If the patient requires follow-up care and seeks treatment at a dental office, the second dentist often needs to take another x-ray to determine a treatment plan. Because most insurance providers, including Medicaid, only cover one x-ray per year, the patient then must pay out-of-pocket for another x-ray. Low-income families cannot afford to pay out-of-pocket and in turn delay or forgo needed treatment.

Advocating & Educating to Improve Oral Health.



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Second, House Bill 203 will allow for the creation of a database of mobile dental facilities that operate in the state. Currently, there is no data on how many or which MDFs are in operation in Ohio, nor is there a centralized resource where communities, such as schools and nursing homes, can go to find mobile dental services.

To rectify this, House Bill 203 requires that when dentists renew their e-licensure form online each year, they must include any MDFs that they are connected with, including location and contact information, on their licensure form. Dentists already provide the office locations that they operate from on the e-licensure form. This bill simply includes MDFs as another location that must be listed. There are no additional fees associated with putting multiple locations on the form.

In conclusion, Oral Health Ohio strongly believes that House Bill 203 is a necessary and common-sense piece of legislation that sets guidelines for improved operation of mobile dental facilities which in turn, enable families and communities to achieve improved oral and overall health.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Marla Morse
Program Director
Oral Health Ohio