



**Shannon Sweeney, RDH**  
**House Bill 203 Proponent Testimony**  
**Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee**  
**January 29, 2020**

Chairman Burke, Vice Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the committee, my name is Shannon Sweeney and I am President of the Ohio Dental Hygienists' Association (ODHA) and on behalf of the members of ODHA I am writing to express our support for House Bill 203, which seeks to regulate the use of mobile dental facilities (MDFs) in Ohio.

Quite simply, this bill is about access to care and information, how information is retrieved and who provides it. There are requirements for information that is provided to the Ohio State Dental Board (OSDB), information provided between the MDF and a dental office and most importantly, information that is provided to the patient or the patient's representative at an MDF.

ODHA has been involved with various drafts of this bill over the past few years and agrees with the simplicity with which House Bill 203 is crafted. We support the notification requirement of the MDF to report to the OSDB a change of phone number or address or the cessation of operation. ODHA supports the ability of a patient to have access to their patient records to avoid duplicative services provided in a dental home setting. The most important piece included in the bill is the information that is provided to the patient or patient's representative about the list of services that were provided by the MDF staff, but also the recommended additional services that may be advisable. Mobile dental facilities play an important role in accessing care and it is important that patients who receive care in them are aware that they may need more than just the preventive care the facilities are designed to provide. The patients need to understand that more intensive restorative care may be needed to fully address and complement the services provided by an MDF.

House Bill 203 does not specify a patient audience, but MDFs could be utilized to serve the needs of nursing home patients and other like facilities other than the previously discussed school settings. As an example, locally the Westerville City School District and some of its schools utilize the services of The Smile Program, the mobile dentists. They set up a mini dental office in three school buildings and visit every six months and provide dental examinations, cleanings, fluoride treatments, x-rays, and sealants (if necessary) for children whose families opted to participate. The American Dental Association endorses the program and it is

operational in 19 states and the District of Columbia. The importance of these services is far reaching. Smile Programs reports on its website ([www.mobiledentists.com](http://www.mobiledentists.com)) that:

- Each year, over 51 million school hours are lost due to poor oral health;
- Tooth decay is the most common childhood disease – 5X more common than asthma;
- Only 25% of Medicaid-eligible children get any kind of dental care;
- Only 20% of the nation’s practicing dental care professionals provide care to people with Medicaid;
- 3 out of every 5 children are affected by tooth decay;
- 16 million children lack access to basic dental care.

Bringing oral health care to a patient is key to solving these access problems. ODHA is proud to support House Bill 203. ODHA appreciates the opportunity to speak to House Bill 203. Please contact me with any questions you may have.