



**Ohio Dental Hygienists' Association
Senate Bill 40 Proponent Testimony
House Health Provider Services Committee
May 14, 2024**

Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Provider Services Committee, I write on behalf of the members of the Ohio Dental Hygienists' Association in support of Senate Bill 40, the Dentist and Dental Hygienist (DDH) Compact. As an association, we advocate measures that strengthen our healthcare workforce, and we are grateful to Senator Roegner for her leadership on this issue. Streamlining the process for dentists and dental hygienists to practice in multiple states with granted privileges would increase portability, improve access to care, and benefit military members and their spouses.

The American Dental Association, American Dental Hygienists' Association, American Dental Education Association, and the Council of State Governments developed language for an interstate compact that would address licensure portability for dentists and dental hygienists. We are proud that our own Ohio State Dental Board was one of several contributing stakeholders. This began well over two years ago in an open, transparent process with input from all over the country.

We want to be clear about a couple of things: the DDH Compact would not change the state's statute for dentists and dental hygienists' scope of practice, and with regard to supervision, there will be no changes in the supervision of dental hygienists. Dentists and dental hygienists use a license granted by a participating state to apply for a compact privilege to practice in other participating states. In order to be eligible, dentists and dental hygienists must have completed the following:

- An unencumbered license in a compact state;
- Graduation from an education program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation;
- Passed a National Board of Examination;
- Completed a clinical assessment; and
- A criminal background check with no disqualifying criminal history.

The above requirements are already law in the State of Ohio for licensure of dentists and dental hygienists.

State licensure boards, including the Ohio State Dental Board, benefit from having a compact in place by maintaining control over the state practice act and licensure processes, a central

database of disciplinary action records, required submission to FBI finger-based criminal background checks, and from economics of scale due to reduced administrative costs.

Seven states have already enacted the DDH Compact (Washington, Iowa, Kansas, Wisconsin, Virginia, Tennessee, and Maine) and currently seven states in addition to Ohio have introduced bills to join the Interstate Compact for Dentists and Dental Hygienists (Colorado, Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, Alabama, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey). It would be very beneficial if Ohio was one of the initial seven states to adopt the DDH Compact because this allows our state to be involved in the formation of the Compact's Commission.

The DDH Compact will significantly benefit patients, dentists, dental hygienists, and our workforce by:

- Increasing opportunities to practice;
- Allowing dentists and dental hygienists from neighboring states to practice in Ohio while not living in the state;
- Allowing military personnel and spouses to easily maintain their professional careers (Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio is one of the largest military bases);
- Increase access to oral health care; and
- Eliminate barriers, costs, and loss of income (there are dental hygienists who have had to acquire and maintain three to six licenses because of a spouse's job opportunities or military moves every few years).

We respectfully ask that you support Senate Bill 40 and favorably report it from committee. Thank you for allowing us to submit proponent testimony on this important legislation, we are proud to support Senate Bill 40 and the Dental and Dental Hygienist Compact.

Sincerely,



Kelly Kneale
President-Elect, Ohio Dental Hygienists' Association