



Proponent Testimony  
Senate Bill 40  
Ohio Senate Health Committee  
May 30, 2023

Marla Morse, MSW, MPA  
Executive Director  
Oral Health Ohio

Chair Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on SB40, which upon enactment would join Ohio to the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Licensure Compact.

My name is Marla Morse, and I am the Executive Director of Oral Health Ohio, a statewide coalition of partners who advocate for and educate to improve the state's oral and overall health. Our work impacts Ohioans who face the greatest oral health disparities, which includes the poor of all ages, communities of color, those living in rural communities, persons with a disability, older adults, and veterans. From infancy to older adulthood, oral health affects a person's overall health and well-being. Poor oral health impacts a person's ability to learn, to engage in social relationships, to gain employment, and complicates management of many chronic conditions. We look forward to a future where all Ohioans have optimal oral health, a vision that will be reached only when there is sufficient access to oral health care. One way of increasing access to oral health care is by passage of SB40, entering the dentist and dental hygienist compact.

Oral Health Ohio believes that dental licensure reciprocity can bring more dentists and dental hygienists to Ohio to address access issues that occur across the state, as it eliminates many of the historic barriers to new dentists and dental hygienists seeking jobs in Ohio without undermining competency in skills and knowledge.

Ohio has been a leader in promoting dental licensure reform and especially in promoting licensure reciprocity and portability for many years. SB40 is the next critical, logical step for dental licensure reform in Ohio and a modest step towards increasing access to oral health care. And, this is not the first instance of Ohio joining such compacts, as it has previously entered the Medical Licensure Compact and the Nurse Licensure Compact.

With the introduction of SB40, Ohio is now one of the first states considering legislation to join the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Licensure Compact. Oral Health Ohio appreciates Senator Roegner's leadership on this issue, as reducing barriers to practicing dentistry and dental hygiene in

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our state can help increase access to care for many Ohioans. I urge you to support SB40 and thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony supporting this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marla Morse" with a horizontal flourish at the end.

Marla Morse  
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