

**FISCAL YEARS 2026/2027 BUDGET
TESTIMONY OF MIGUEL A. SANTIAGO, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OHIO
STATE DENTAL BOARD**

**BEFORE THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HEALTH COMMITTEE**

FEBRUARY 13, 2025

Good morning, Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and Members of the House Health Committee. My name is Miguel A. Santiago. I am the Chief Legal Counsel for the Ohio State Dental Board. Currently, I am also serving as the Board's Interim Executive Director. On behalf of the Board President, Dr. Canise Bean, and the members and staff of the Ohio State Dental Board, we thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Fiscal Year 2026 and 2027 Ohio State Dental Board Budget as proposed by Governor DeWine.

The mission of the Ohio State Dental Board is to protect Ohioans through legislation, licensure, education, and enforcement of laws and rules with fairness and integrity. The vision of the Ohio State Dental Board is to protect the oral health of Ohioans and to promote access to care. The Board accomplishes this by issuing and maintaining the credentials for over 40,000 dental professionals in Ohio. Aside from licensing dentists and dental hygienists, the Board registers expanded function dental auxiliaries (EFDAs), issues certificates for dental radiographers and coronal polishers, and processes various other limited licenses, and permits for anesthesia, sedation, and teledentistry.

Payroll costs and Department of Administrative Services' costs account for our agency's largest expenditures. However, the Board utilizes both the Office of Budget and Management's Central Services Agency, for fiscal and human resources services, and Ohio Shared Services. The

Board's staff is composed of: The Executive Director; Chief Legal Counsel (currently I am performing both of these functions); Deputy Director and Chief of Staff; four Enforcement Officers; and six administrative staff which includes one staff attorney; an education coordinator; a monitoring coordinator; a licensure coordinator; a fiscal coordinator, and a receptionist. The Board itself is composed of thirteen members, nine dentists, three dental hygienists, and one public member.

The Board's budget is entirely supported out of the Occupational Licensing and Regulatory Fund (4K90) by fees collected from those seeking licenses, certificates, and registrations as well as the renewal of those credentials. Some of the fees collected also include pass-through funds which are collected by the Dental Board and then transferred to the Ohio Department of Health, which administers the Loan Repayment Programs for both dentists and dental hygienists. Also, the Dental Board receives no revenues from fines as the Board is unique among most licensing boards in that it has no fining authority provided to it in the revised code.

Overall, the Board is a net contributor to the 4K90 fund, bringing in more revenue than it uses on a biennial basis. Historically, the Board has operated with budget surpluses in even-numbered fiscal years and budget deficits in odd-numbered fiscal years. However, recent legislative changes have altered the renewal cycle for many new licensees and made initial license fees uniform. As such, the budget surpluses in even-numbered fiscal years and budget deficits in odd-numbered fiscal years will begin to fade bringing stability to the Board's budget cycle over time.

The Board respectfully requests spending authority totaling \$2,281,030 for fiscal year 2026, and \$2,372,258 for fiscal year 2027. This amount supports necessary Board operations, barring any expenses related to legislative initiatives which require changes to the eLicense

system, or expenditures associated with the implementation of Senate Bill 40, the recently enacted Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact Bill.

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact allows for an Interstate Commission, a newly formed joint government agency, to levy and collect an annual assessment from each Participating State. The amount of this fee has yet to be determined by the Commission, but we anticipate this fee will be imposed at some point either in Fiscal Year 2026 or 2027. We also anticipate the amount of work for our licensing coordinator to increase as the recipients of compact privileges will have to take a jurisprudence exam and will have to comply with other qualifications which the Dental Board requires of all dental practitioners.

In the near future, the Dental Board anticipates an increase in the number of Dentists in Ohio as the Bitonte College of Dentistry at NEOMED, the Northeast Ohio Medical University, in Rootstown, Ohio will be enrolling their first class in the Fall of 2025. Over time, this will lead to an overall increase in the number of dental licenses issued, and it will present a more immediate need for the issuance of limited dental teaching licenses, and limited resident licenses.

In closing, the Dental Board is fully committed to responding to the needs of the public we serve and the professionals we regulate. Madam Chair, I would be happy to respond to any questions that you or any Members of your committee may have for me at this time.