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American Academy of Craniofacial Pain
International Association for Orthodontics
American Dental Association
Ohio Dental Association
Northeast Ohio Dental Society

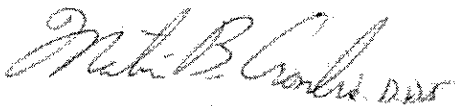
This is an urgent appeal to grant licensed dental practitioners from other states reciprocity to legally perform dental services at charitable clinics without having to apply and pay for a provisional license in the state of Ohio. Currently, the State of Ohio is a closed state in which licensed practitioners from other states willing to give of themselves in the service of others must apply and pay a fee for a provisional license in order to provide needed dental care at free clinics. Dentists and hygienists who are willing to spend time out of their offices and pay for travel and lodging expenses all for the benefit of citizens of this state should not be subject to procedural obstacles and fees that would in any way discourage this kind of selfless service.

As a real life example of this, the county of Ashtabula, Ohio (with a significant population at or near the poverty level) is hosting a Remote Area Medical (RAM) free clinic this month. This is a truly remarkable organization that has done nearly 300 of these free medical/dental clinics providing care for the underserved all across the country (ramusa.org). In Ashtabula, being a border county of Pennsylvania with New York and West Virginia also in close proximity, we have access to dental professionals in these states that are willing to participate. Many of these professionals have worked other charitable clinics in other states and find it puzzling that Ohio would choose to make it more difficult to participate in a clinic to benefit its own people.

One of the greatest challenges to the profession surrounds the issue of access to care. Free clinics such as RAM are one way to help address this issue and something we can point to that, as a profession, we are doing something about. The state Dental Board and the state of Ohio should do everything within their power to encourage this kind of selfless participation.

I urge you to give serious consideration to House Bill #541 which eliminates the necessity for a provisional dental license and fee to provide needed access to care for the underserved at these charitable clinics in the state of Ohio.

Professionally,



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