

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5322

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 4, 1997
Ways & Means, March 6, 1997

Title: An act relating to removing regulatory barriers to the provision of oral health care services to rural, remote, and underserved populations.

Brief Description: Removing regulatory barriers to the provision of oral health care services to rural, remote, and underserved populations.

Sponsors: Senators Deccio, Thibaudeau and Kohl.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/11/97, 2/20/97, 3/4/97 [DPS].
Ways & Means: 3/6/97 [w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5322 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton, Fairley, Franklin, Strannigan and Wojahn.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Without recommendation.

Signed by Senators West, Chair; Deccio, Vice Chair; Strannigan, Vice Chair; Bauer, Hochstatter, Long, Loveland, McDonald, Roach, Rossi, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Swecker, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Zarelli.

Staff: Steve Jones (786-7440)

Background: Currently, dental hygienists perform duties within their scope of practice under the supervision of a dentist. Current restrictions in statute prohibit more than two dental hygienists to practice under the supervision of one dentist.

Dental hygienists may perform specific duties without dental supervision under specific conditions defined in statute. One of these conditions is that the services be provided in local public health facilities. Practitioners have expressed concern that settings which fit into this category should be better defined.

Dental hygienists who come to Washington State from another state may receive a temporary license for 18 months without examination while they fulfill the requirements of licensure in this state. This program of offering temporary licensure will terminate on January 1, 1998, unless there is a change in statute.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The current ratio of dentists to dental hygienists permitted in an office setting is eliminated.

Public health facilities are clarified under the independent practice section of the hygiene statute to include state or federally-funded community and migrant health centers, and tribal clinics.

The January 1, 1998 termination date for the dental hygienist temporary licensure program is removed.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The current restriction on the number of dental hygienists allowed to practice under a dentist's license and supervision is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Eliminating the ratio will create new opportunities for dental hygienists to work in underserved communities.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Mary Smith, WSDA, Tery Grubb, WSDA; Jane Beyers, DSHS/MAA; Norma Wells, UW; Mimi Fields, DOH; Martha Fales, UW; Jeff Larsen, WSDHA; Ruth Needham, RDH; Lana Poole, RDH; Betty Sherman, RDH.