



March 6, 2024

Chair Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee;

I am writing today on behalf of the Association of Dental Support Organizations in support of SF2990, a bill that would establish the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact.

There are approximately 425,000 licensed dentists and dental hygienists in the United States. Despite the high demand for oral health services in many states, licensees are generally limited to providing dental care solely in the states in which they hold a license. The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact would allow dentists and dental hygienists licensed in a state that is a participating member of the Compact to practice in other participating member states without additional licensing requirements.

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact is an occupational licensing interstate compact. As you are aware, interstate compacts are legally binding agreements among the participating states. This Compact was drafted by the Council of State Governments in partnership with the Department of Defense, American Dental Association, and the American Dental Hygienists Association.

Unfortunately, Minnesota is below the national average when it comes to access to dental care coming in at 58.42 dentists per 100,000 residents (national average is 60.4 dentists per 100,000). Passage of the Compact would allow Minnesota to attract more oral health care professionals to assist in the effort to reverse these concerning dental hurdles Minnesota is facing and help turn the state into a national model for oral health care.

The Compact would also benefit military families. Spouses, who happen to be dentists or hygienist, of service members who are assigned to a new duty station in a state participating in the Compact would be able to seek employment in the dental community in these states without the need for additional licensing under the state's compact privileges.

This session you can improve oral health care in the state of Minnesota through the passage of SF2990, which would make the state a participating member of the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact. Once in place, the Compact will increase license portability for dentists and hygienists looking to practice in the state and support our military families. Most importantly it will improve access to oral health care for Minnesota residents, while managing the current system of state licensure. For these reasons I ask for the Committee's favorable consideration of SF2990.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Steele
Director of Government Relations
The Association of Dental Support Organizations