

**Oral Testimony – September 12, 2017**

**Massachusetts Legislature Joint Committee on Public Health**

**Alec Eidelman, Tufts Dental and Public Health student**

**In support of H.B.2820/S.B. 142, “An Act Relative to Graduate Education for Certain Professionals” (2017)**

As a 4<sup>th</sup> year Tufts Dental and Public Health student, the opportunity to advocate on behalf of my profession, institution, and patients is a tremendous honor – thank you.

The mid-level provider discussion has been hotly debated since I began dental school and three years ago, when I was open to it’s discussion – I was heavily scrutinized. Impassioned by public service, I became activated by promoting community water fluoridation in Rockport and Gloucester near my hometown of Marblehead. When citizens asked me why I was there and who was paying me - I replied, “Fluoride prevents cavities that would otherwise generate revenue for dentists, I’m here because it’s the right thing to do for my community.”

This same mentality is with me today while **I advocate For Bill S. 142 and H. 2820** to provide education, regulation, and services to benefit the citizens of Massachusetts. Mid-level providers draw the comparison to NP’s and PA’s who require extensive clinical training and require masters level degrees. This training helps prepare these clinicians not only to preform procedures but to manage and treat patients.

My public health training has taught me that the way to provide the most economic, efficient, and **equitable** care to underserved populations is through prevention, screening, and education. These services will help curb spending, *as opposed to the potential greater increases seen with bill S. 1169.*

While caring for a 16 year old MassHealth patient this year with over 12 cavities and failing fillings, I was faced with the decision to treatment plan costly crowns, fillings, and root canals or to work with the patient. While explaining the process of cavities, her dietary influences, and the importance of hygiene and appointments it was clear that what this patient needed was support and direct attention - not just treatment. Recognizing this was only possible through extensive training, and direct attention to the patient.



Two Willow Street  
Southborough, MA 01745-1027  
800.342.8747 • Fax: 508.480.0002  
[massdental.org](http://massdental.org)

I have invested over \$430,000.00 into my dental education, let's invest in mid-level providers to not just to preform treatments, but to care for our underserved populations – because it's the right thing to do for my community.