

Do you have time to make one phone call? Can you find one minute and 40 seconds in your day to shape the future of your profession?

If you answered “Yes”, please read on. If you answered, “No”, then enjoy EFDAs and assistants doing your work in the future! ODHA is supporting the effort to introduce a bill in Ohio to allow hygienists to work to the highest level of their license, create a dental therapist and a dental hygiene therapist. Senator Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering) and Senator Cecil Thomas (D-Cincinnati) are willing to introduce a bill to add a midlevel provider into the dental team. ODHA has assured her that we will stand with them and provide every resource we can to ensure that this becomes a reality.

As a bill is introduced it is customary for legislators to ask their colleagues to “co-sponsor” a bill, which means they agree that the bill would make a great law and that they want to stand with the sponsor to show support. We are at the beginning of this process of the dental therapist bill and Senators Lehner and Thomas are asking their colleagues to stand with them. We are asking you to contact your State Senator (essentially make one phone call) to ask him or her to co-sponsor the bill.

To find your legislator, please visit www.legislature.state.oh.us and type in your zip code. Knowing your +4 zip code will verify the name if multiple names show up. The message is simple:

“My name is _____ and I live in _____ and I am calling to urge Senator _____ to add his/her name to the dental therapist bill that Senator Lehner and Senator Thomas will soon be introducing. The issue is important to addressing the access to care problem in Ohio and will create jobs for oral health professionals willing to serve underserved patients in areas of greatest need in this state. I would appreciate your consideration and I urge you to co-sponsor this critical bill.

Again, my name is _____ and if you have any questions, please feel free to reach me at number or email address (whichever you feel comfortable sharing). Thank you and have a nice day!”

Because offices are busy this time of year and to minimize engaging with staff on the details of the bill, we urge you to call after 5:00 pm or before 8:30 to leave a voice mail. With the time spent waiting for the voicemail to kick on and reading the message, you should be able to complete this task in about 1 minute and 40 seconds! Your voice is important in the effort and it is only you that will make the difference in the first round of this effort. You may not get a call back, but the important part of the exercise is that you are the person making the call. Emails are discouraged at this time.

We encourage you to complete these calls as soon as possible and no later than Friday, March 10th as the co-sponsor period ends at 5:00 pm that day.