
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE BOARD OF DENTISTRY AND DENTAL HYGIENE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the current
2 composition of the board of dental examiners should be amended
3 to better reflect the full scope of services offered by licensed
4 oral health practitioners in a diverse array of settings. There
5 are currently twelve members on the board: eight practicing
6 dentists, two dental hygienists, and two public members. As of
7 April 13, 2015, there were 1,512 dentists and 1,052 dental
8 hygienists licensed by the State. According to these numbers,
9 one dentist board member represents one hundred eighty-nine
10 licensed dentists, while one dental hygienist board member
11 represents five hundred twenty-six licensed dental hygienists.
12 Further, the current composition of the board does not ensure
13 representation of dental hygienists practicing outside Oahu or
14 any licensees practicing outside private office settings.

15 Like the eight dentist members on the board, the two dental
16 hygienist members are practicing professionals and must arrange
17 for time off, often as unpaid leave, to fulfill their increasing



1 duties. It is challenging for the two dental hygienist members
2 to carry out their growing responsibilities, which include
3 providing dental hygienist expertise and perspective, as
4 compared to the eight dentists sharing board member tasks.

5 The legislature finds that dental hygiene is one of the few
6 health professions that is generally controlled by another
7 profession. Due to the significantly higher representation of
8 dentists on the board, the dental hygienists' contributions and
9 guidance are often not reflected in the board's actions. A 1993
10 state auditor's report noted that adequate representation for
11 dental hygienists was particularly important, "since the
12 interests of [dental hygienists] may conflict with and be
13 outweighed by those of dentists."

14 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to promote adequate
15 representation of dental hygienists on the board of dental
16 examiners by adding one additional dental hygienist member and
17 requiring that at least one of the three hygienist members
18 represent the neighbor islands. This measure also establishes
19 prior public health dentistry experience as a recommended, but
20 not mandatory, qualification for at least one dentist member.



1 SECTION 2. Section 448-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 **"§448-5 Board of examiners; appointment.** The board of
4 dental examiners shall consist of [~~twelve~~] thirteen members,
5 eight of whom shall be practicing dentists who have been engaged
6 in the practice of dentistry for a period of five years
7 preceding their several appointments, [~~two~~] three of whom shall
8 be practicing dental hygienists, duly licensed under section
9 447-1, and who have been engaged in the practice of dental
10 hygiene in the State for a period of five years preceding
11 appointment, and two of whom shall be public members. No member
12 shall be in any way connected with, or interested financially
13 in, any dental supply company. One member in the practice of
14 dentistry shall be appointed from each of the counties of
15 Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai and five members in the practice of
16 dentistry shall be appointed from the city and county of
17 Honolulu. A background in public health dentistry is a
18 desirable qualification, but not a requirement, for at least one
19 member of the board who is a practicing dentist. Of the members
20 who are practicing dental hygienists, two shall be residents of
21 the city and county of Honolulu and one shall be a resident of



1 the county of Hawaii, Maui, or Kauai. As used in this chapter,
2 "board" means the board of dental examiners."

3 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
4 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2070.



Report Title:

Board of Dental Examiners; Dental Hygienists

Description:

Amends the composition of the Board of Dental Examiners to add an additional dental hygienist member and specify that two hygienist members shall reside in the City and County of Honolulu and one shall reside in the County of Hawaii, Maui, or Kauai. (SB371 HD1)

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