

Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health  
April 3, 2017  
Hearing on HB 374 HD2 Relating to Dental Assistants  
**Testimony in Support of HB 374 HD2, SD1**  
Ellie Kelley-Miyashiro, RDH



Dear Respected Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association (HDHA) supports the intent of **HB 374 HD2, SD1**. We would like to congratulate you on your leadership in initiating this important discussion during this legislative session. A sunrise analysis will bring much-needed attention to the issue of regulating dental assistants in Hawaii with the primary intention of increasing public safety.

In a dental office, dental assistants are an important part of the dental team. Each team member plays a critical role in the execution of outstanding patient care. According to statistics from the Dental Assisting National Board, 39 states throughout the country require some form of certification and/or licensure for dental assistants to obtain employment. All 39 states therefore regulate the profession of dental assisting. We feel that the requirement of credentials will not only insure the public is being treated by educated, trained professionals, it will ultimately place a needed value on the profession of dental assisting.

With that being said, HDHA feels that in order to protect the safety of the public while the sunrise analysis is being conducted, we feel the wording: "provided that the rules shall not infringe upon or overlap or conflict with the duties and scope of practice licensed dental hygienists under chapter 447. No person shall employ, direct, or otherwise order a dental assistant or other person to perform services or procedures within the scope of practice of dental hygiene as provided in chapter 447, unless the person who performs the services or procedures is a licensed dental hygienist under section 447-1" should remain in the bill and is a much needed addition to HRS 448-3 (b). Having this in statute would allow changes in duties for dental assistants as technology advances, without encroaching on the scope of practice of another, licensed profession.

HDHA thanks you for your time and consideration of **HB 374 HD2, SD1**. We would like to convey our desire that dentists, assistants and hygienists continue to be integral members of the oral health team, and feel that the public is best served and protected when all oral health providers and highly trained and work within their practice acts.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**LATE**

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**HB374**

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<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Noelani Greene	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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