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January 30, 2018

Senate Standing Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Kansas Legislature

RE: Senate Bill No. 312 – Licensure of Dental Therapists

Chairwoman Schmidt and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed bill for licensure of dental therapists. We support increasing access to dental services for Kansas citizens living in underserved areas of the state. The licensed dental therapist would increase capacity of the dental professional workforce.

Request: KSAND is requesting consideration of revisions to wording appearing on page 3, lines 1-2 that would clarify the role of the dental therapist in supporting safety, consumer protection, and oral health while not extending into the scope of practice for a Kansas licensed dietitian.

Current: (3) oral health instruction and disease prevention education, including nutritional counseling and dietary analysis;

Proposed Revision:

Option #1: Oral health-related instruction and disease prevention education, including nutrition education related to dental health.

Option #2: Oral health-related nutrition and dietary instruction, and disease prevention education.

A registered dietitian has a minimum of a Baccalaureate degree, completion of an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics or has obtained verification of completion of required coursework, 1200 hours of supervised practice, successful completion of a national registration examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration, 75 hours of continuing professional education every 5-years, and in Kansas, is licensed (Article 59 – Dietitians - 65-5901 Dietitian Licensing Act).

In reviewing the academic preparation of dental therapists and advanced dental therapists in the Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene/Master of Dental Therapy dual degree program at the University of Minnesota, School of Dentistry, the curriculum includes one (1) 3-unit course: Cariology and Applied Nutrition in Dental Hygiene Care (DH 2231).

We are in communication with the Kansas Dental Association and the Kansas Dental Hygienist Association to gain support and to determine mutually agreed upon wording that can be supported by the three associations.

The Kansas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics respectfully requests committee consideration and support for modifying the identified wording in SB 312.

Thank you,

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