



February 1, 2018

Neutral Testimony – SB 312

Thank you, Madame Chair and members of the committee. On behalf of the thousands of Americans for Prosperity activists across Kansas, thank you for this opportunity to provide neutral testimony for SB 312.

We have a shortage of dentists in many parts of Kansas, and a severe shortage of dentists willing to accept Medicaid. At the same time, we have an untapped talent pool of Kansas dental assistants and hygienists who are willing to step up to help.

Through a Dental Therapist model, we can ensure every Kansan has access to routine, quality dental care without driving to the next county or waiting weeks to get an appointment. These Dental Therapists would address the medical workforce shortage in much the same way as physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

In addition to the added care benefits, a study by the Pew Charitable Trust indicates that Dental Therapists would allow dentists to expand their practices, and make dental practices more profitable. Dentists would have the freedom, based on their own preference and practice mode, to add a Dental Therapist to their team.

Under SB 312, Dental Therapists would be permitted to independently provide 35 non-surgical dental procedures. While we appreciate the forward movement on this issue, we recommend the committee amend the bill to allow Dental Therapists to perform other needed services, such as filling cavities, without the currently drafted constricting supervision requirements to allow care for many Kansans with limited access to dental care needs.

Thank you for your time and work on this critical issue to providing dental care for Kansans.

Jeff Glendening
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