

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5773

As of February 12, 1999

Title: An act relating to dental hygienists.

Brief Description: Creating the board of dental hygiene.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau, Deccio and Spanel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/15/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Christopher Blake (786-7446)

Background: The Secretary of Health is the disciplinary authority for dental hygienists. The Dental Hygiene Examining Committee serves as an advisory board for the secretary. The secretary has regulatory authority over 20 different licensed professions, while 14 other professions are subject to the authority of boards or commissions. Some have suggested that it would be better to regulate dental hygienists with a board, rather than the secretary.

Summary of Bill: The Board of Dental Hygiene is created. The board must convene at least once a year in meetings that are open and public. The board consists of four dental hygienists with at least five years of experience in that field and one member of the public who has an interest in dental services. The board is responsible for developing, administering, and approving licensing examinations; reviewing applicant qualifications; adopting rules for carrying out its duties; establishing continuing education program requirements; keeping records of the proceedings; and deciding questions relating to the scope of practice of dental hygienists. Several duties of the secretary relating to the regulation of licensed dental hygienists are transferred to the board.

The Dental Hygiene Examining Committee is discontinued. All references to it are either deleted or changed to the Board of Dental Hygiene.

Licensed dental hygienists must wear a name badge that identify themselves as an "L.D.H."

Provisions regarding the issuance of temporary licenses are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 9, 1999.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.