

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5606

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As of February 13, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to regulating dental professionals by permitting dental hygienists and dental assistants to take impressions under certain circumstances and by authorizing the issuance of a limited license to dental hygienists who actively practice or are licensed in Canada.

**Brief Description:** Modifying provisions related to licensing and scope of practice for dental professionals.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jayapal, Rivers, Frockt, King, Keiser and Kohl-Welles.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health Care: 2/12/15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Staff:** Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

**Background:** Dental hygienists must be licensed by the Department of Health (DOH) and may perform dental services only under the supervision of a licensed dentist. DOH may issue limited licenses to dental hygienists who are actively practicing in and licensed in another state that allows a substantially equivalent scope of practice to what is allowed in Washington. Dental hygienists may remove deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth, apply topical preventive or prophylactic agents, polish and smooth restorations, perform root planing and soft tissue curettage, and perform other operations and services delegated to them by a dentist.

Dental assistants must be registered with the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (DQAC) and may perform duties authorized by DQAC after a supervising dentist personally diagnoses the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedures to be performed, and is continuously onsite in the treatment facility during the procedure.

Neither dental hygienists nor dental assistants may take any impression of the teeth or jaw, or the relationships of the teeth or jaws, for the purpose of fabricating any intra-oral restoration, appliance, or prosthesis.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Bill:** Dental hygienists and dental assistants may take impressions of the teeth or jaw as a delegated duty pursuant to DQAC rules.

DOH may issue a limited license to dental hygienists who are actively practicing in a Canadian province and who are licensed in a Canadian province if that province allows a substantially equivalent scope of practice to what is allowed in Washington.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is updating the scope of practice for dental hygienists and dental assistants. DQAC will write rules, and the procedures may only be performed according to DQAC rules. The bill also makes a correction to the limited licensing of Canadian professionals; Canada has an equivalent scope of practice and similar reciprocity exists for dentists.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Jayapal, prime sponsor; Marilyn Rothen, WA State Dental Hygienists' Assn.; Bracken Killpack, citizen.