



Date: February 1, 2012

To: Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

From: Kevin J. Robertson, CAE
Executive Director

RE: **Support of SB 326** – RDH Extended Care Permit I & II Update

Chairman Schmidt and members of the committee I apologize for not being able to testify in person today in support of SB 326. SB 326 was discussed by several key players during the 2010 interim and was (is) originally included in 2011 SB 132.

The Kansas Dental Association (KDA) believes that Registered Dental Hygienists (RDH) are an important and invaluable dental team member and their service is essential to addressing the preventative oral health needs of Kansas citizens.

The Extended Care Permit (ECP) I and II concept is designed to allow dental hygienists to provide their current level of preventative services to underserved populations like Medicaid eligible children and adults, nursing home residents, school children and homebound persons.

Let me take a moment to review the brief history of the Extended Care Permit concept which allows qualified dental hygienists to practice in settings outside the dental office. In 2003 the KDA and Kansas Dental Hygienists' Association (KDHA) worked collaboratively to come to an agreement to forward this concept to the legislature. The Extended Care Permit dental hygienists have an increased role helping meet the preventative dental needs of many Kansans outside the dental office setting.

In 2007, after four years of practical experience implementing the Extended Care Permit concept, changes (tweaks) were made by the legislature at that time to improve the delivery of oral health services by ECP dental hygienists.

2012 SB 326 is a further effort to address some concerns with the delivery of the dental care by ECP dental hygienists – specifically in school settings. SB 326 will ease the burden of ECP's working in school settings. Ultimately, this should create more opportunities for programs

through the KDHE Bureau of Oral Health and others that will increase the preventative dental care for school children.

The KDA supports the amendment offered by Oral Health Kansas.

I urge you to support SB 326 and the OHK amendment with a favorable recommendation.
Thank you for reading my comments.