

February 5, 2024

The Honorable Mark Sickles
General Assembly Building
201 North 9th Street,
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Jason Ballard
General Assembly Building
201 North 9th Street,
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Support of HB 225

Dear Delegates Sickles and Ballard:

On behalf of the American Association of Endodontists (AAE), I am writing in support of HB 225, regarding the ratification of the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact in Virginia. The AAE is the largest global association of endodontists, representing more than 8,000 members that are committed to delivering the highest standards of oral health care to their patients. Endodontists are dental specialists with distinctive expertise in the diagnosis and management of dental pain. Our specialty extends to preserving patients' natural teeth through root canal therapy and related surgical procedures, thereby contributing to the overall well-being and oral health of individuals under their care.

HB 225 would ratify the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact in Virginia, allowing dentists and dental hygienists licensed in any compact state to practice in another. The Compact facilitates licensure reciprocity among participant states while preserving each state's authority to regulate its own licensure and scope of practice standards. The National Center for Interstate Compacts developed this compact with public partnership with the Department of Defense (DOD), state bodies, dental organizations, and the public to ensure the Compact increased portability and upheld patient safety.

Compact licensure agreements play a vital role in enhancing the distribution of healthcare services in the United States. Currently, forty states and territories have adopted similar healthcare licensure compacts for various providers, including emergency medical technicians, nurses, physicians, physical therapists, and psychologists. In the face of staffing shortages plaguing the dental industry nationwide, the urgency of implementing this Compact cannot be overstated. Its implementation stands as a pivotal measure to ensure that the invaluable skills of dentists and dental hygienists find their way to the underserved areas where they are needed most.

The AAE applauds the introduction of HB 225, and we look forward to collaborating with you to advance this legislation in the Virginia General Assembly. Please contact Catherine French, AAE's Assistant Executive Director for Advocacy and Professional Relations, at cfrench@aae.org or (312) 872-0474 for additional information.

Sincerely,



Craig Hirschberg, DDS
President, American Association of Endodontists