



March 12, 2015

Texas Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Texas House Public Health Committee

Dear Legislator,

I write today in support of Senate Bill 787 and House Bill 1940, which would tear down an unnecessary government barrier to the dental services that Texas small businesses can provide to consumers in the state. Often, proposals that increase health care options for underserved populations do so at a significant cost to taxpayers. SB 787 and HB 1940, however, utilize the free market at no cost to the state.

Dentists who want to expand their practices to include educated and qualified mid-level practitioners should be free to do so. **Innovative ideas like this have faced intense opposition but are very similar to the fights that took place decades ago with the emergence of nurse practitioners.** Physicians began working and collaborating with nurses who had clinical experience to fill a void left by specialization in the medical field. Today, nurse practitioners provide equivalent or superior care to that provided by physicians. SB 787 and HB 1940 responsibly follow the nurse practitioner model for dental practices.

Americans for Tax Reform supports a wide range of free market solutions to today's health care issues. It is undeniable that there is a dentist shortage, particularly in underserved and rural areas of the state. SB 787 and HB 1940 would alleviate this issue by permitting, but not requiring, small businesses to hire Dental Hygiene Practitioners and **the state should not stand in the way.**

I encourage the legislature to pass SB 787 and HB 1940 because this legislation doesn't only benefit small businesses and consumers; it also benefits taxpayers who bear the burden of rising health care costs, including Medicaid. **At no cost to taxpayers, SB 787 and HB 1940 are common sense pieces of legislation and a model for free market health care reform in the states.**

If you have any questions about ATR's position on this issue, please contact state affairs manager Paul Blair at 202-785-0266 or by email at pblair@atr.org.

Onward,

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

Cc: Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick

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