



AMERICANS for TAX REFORM

February 12, 2018

To: Members of the Wisconsin House and Senate
Re: AB945 and SB784
From: Americans for Tax Reform

Dear Members of the Wisconsin House and Senate,

I write today in support of Assembly Bill 945 and its companion, Senate Bill 784. If approved, these bills would tear down an unnecessary government barrier to the dental services that Wisconsin 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. AB945 and SB784, 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. Dental therapists are highly educated, thoroughly trained and tested professionals who operate as part of a larger dental team, and focus on preventative and restorative treatments under the supervision of a dentist. 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 that 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. **AB945 and SB784 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. **AB945 and SB784 would alleviate the dentist shortage by permitting, but not requiring, small businesses to hire dental therapists and the state should not stand in the way.**

I encourage the legislature to pass these bills 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. That may be why in a national poll conducted by ATR in 2016, **79% of voters expressed support for the creation of mid-level dental providers, including 77% of Republicans, and 80% of Independents and Democrats.** At no cost to taxpayers, AB945 and SB784 are common sense bills that serve as a model for free market health care reform in the states.

If you have any questions on these bills, feel free to reach out to Paul Blair, ATR's strategic initiatives director, at 202-785-0266 or by email at pblair@atr.org.

Sincerely,

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