

because of limitations that are currently placed on the traditional, licensed dental hygienist. The current delivery of oral health care is not working. This is an ongoing crisis within VT and nationally since before the time I became a hygienist almost 20 years ago. We cannot wait any longer to implement this provider."

Sheila Banister, an Associate Professor at the Vermont Technical College School of Dental Hygiene, discussed the need for improved dental access she sees every day, "Just yesterday we treated a 23 year old patient who had already lost seven teeth to decay, is well on his way to losing several more, and cannot find a dental home that will accept his insurance. This is not an anomaly; we see these cases every day in our clinic and, for many of those who come to us for help, there is no place to refer these patients. Adding the Licensed Dental Practitioner to the dental team will increase access to care, prevent disease, create jobs and save taxpayers money."

S.20 is currently being reviewed by the Senate Health and Welfare Committee, and H.1 is being reviewed by the House Committee on Government Operations. The Senate Health and Welfare Committee will be taking testimony on the bill Thursday February 5th.

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