

March 14, 2024

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
Committee on Education & the Workforce
United States Congress
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Congress
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education & the Workforce
United States Congress
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Congress
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx and Chairman Jordan and Ranking Members Scott and Nadler:

On behalf of the 159,000 members of the American Dental Association (ADA), we write to urge your committees to take up **H.R. 1310, the States Handling Access to Reciprocity for Employment (SHARE) Act**, sponsored by Representatives Tracey Mann (KS-01) and Joe Neguse (CO-02).

Dentists and dental hygienists are among the many healthcare professions experiencing severe shortages. When surveyed in November 2023 by the ADA Health Policy Institute, dentists named staffing shortages, recruitment, and retention as their top concern. Nearly 40% of dentists reported that they have an inadequate number of hygienists on staff, and 87% of dentists told the ADA that recruiting for hygienist and dental assistant positions is extremely challenging.

The ADA supports a broad range of policy solutions to these staffing issues, one of which is licensure portability. Any delay in licensing causes a direct impact on access to care. Along with many other healthcare professions, the ADA supported the development of a Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact (DDH Compact).

A key element of this compact is ensuring patient safety, which is why the DDH Compact requires applicants to complete an FBI background check as other compacts require. However, some states have struggled to implement background checks and, in some instances, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has prevented the release of background check information to assist in the processing of a compact licensure application.

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The SHARE Act would address this problem by requiring the FBI to make criminal history record information available to a state occupational or professional licensing authority for background checks of individuals seeking a license under an interstate compact. A state licensing authority may not share criminal history record information with the compact's commission, any other state entity or licensing authority, or the public, but may inform the compact's commission of completion of a background check.

Our goal is to ensure that every provider who seeks licensure is properly vetted to ensure patients are protected and to facilitate licensure portability so that patients have access to care. We believe the SHARE Act provides necessary protections and would allow states the ability properly assess applicants seeking an interstate compact licensure to alleviate workforce shortages.

Thank you for your consideration and we ask that you take up the SHARE Act in your committees and seek its passage in the U.S. House.

If you have any questions, please contact Chris Tampio at TampioC@ada.org, or at 202-789-5178, or Matt Rossetto at RossettoM@ada.org, or at 408-315-1017.

Sincerely,

Linda J. Edgar, D.D.S., M.Ed.
President

Raymond A. Cohlma, D.D.S.
Executive Director

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