

Statement on Preserving Dental Choice and Access in the 2016 Legislative Session

Last week the Washington State Legislature sent a strong message to the Washington State Dental Association that access to quality dental care is important for the citizens of Washington. The Association of Dental Support Organizations and a broad coalition of dentists have opposed the WSDA's attempts to remove choices for dentists in how they set up their practices, and the Legislature responded by stopping a WSDA bill (SB 6318) that would have achieved that.

There is a well-documented shortage of dental professionals across Washington State, and there were several quality proposals in this legislative session to advance solutions. Unfortunately, none of those initiatives advanced this session, as the leadership of the WSDA opposed them.

There are nearly 150 dentists in Washington State that have chosen to contract with dental support organizations for non-clinical services like inventory, non-clinical staffing and billing. These dentists are responsible for the oral health of more than 325,000 patients in Washington State and have testified that they embrace this practice model for the flexibility it affords them, whether it be in caring for their patients or dealing with the burden of student loans.

We will continue to work with lawmakers in the months ahead to address our state's shortage of dental professionals by protecting choices for dentists, so they may provide quality affordable dental care.

About ADSO

ADSO is an international trade association whose members support more than 12,000 dentists across the country. ADSO supports its members through research, education and advocacy; enabling them to foster innovation, collaboration and a vibrant market where DSO-supported dentists can provide quality oral health care.

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