

Exhibit No. 14Date 1/14/2011Bill No. 8B2

## SB2 Supportive Testimony

Dear Chairman Murphy and Committee Members.

I am a dental hygienist working in Helena, and I support SB2. Dental hygienists are educated to visually assess and recognize oral health conditions and we are required to do so when we take our national and regional board examinations. Therefore every hygienist in Montana has proven the ability to assess oral conditions. LAP (Limited Access Permit) hygienists are further qualified to do so because they must have at least 3 years of experience and additional continuing education. In 2003 the MDA (Montana Dental Association) supported the creation of the LAP and agreed that the services LAP hygienists could provide did not constitute dental diagnosis and treatment.

When we assess a tooth for a sealant we simply observe whether we see a "hole" in the tooth, or not. Even if we see a stain that could be the beginning of tooth decay, we are not asked to diagnose whether it is decay or not because the guidelines recommend that "non-cavitated lesions" also be sealed. Dental hygienists are already allowed in statute to perform school-based screenings without supervision or authorization by dentists, and screening IS visual assessment.

Placing a sealant can protect the biting surface from 100% of decay if applied properly. Tooth decay (dental caries) affects children in the US more than any other chronic infectious disease. The Surgeon General's report on oral health indicates that sealants can reduce decay in school children by more than 70%.

By passing SB2 we could eliminate a lot of cavities and pain for these children. Please vote YES on SB2. Thank you for your time and commitment.

Respectfully submitted,

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