

**ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IC
SEPTEMBER 11, 2012
EXHIBIT 18**

Chairman Berry and Committee Members: Good afternoon

My name is Allen Casteel, (ALLEN CASTEEL). I am the President of the Denturist Association of Montana, a Licensed Denturist, and a solo practitioner. This is not a turf war. This is an attempt provide better access to care for the denture wearers of Montana.

The Montana Dental Association has proposed a Denturist committee formulation under which Denturists cannot function. At the Board of Dentistry meeting on September 7th, it was stated by Dr. Chamberlain that there was "little interest from the denturists to become a part of this committee". Contrary to Dr. Chamberlain's statement, Denturists are not interested in being on a committee dominated by a group diametrically opposed to our existence and believe that the creation of this committee is still no answer to the problems that face our profession. The Denturist on the Board, Cliff Christenot's refusal to participate was very well expressed at the June 8th meeting when he said that he would not be a part of an edentulous committee, that is-a committee with no rule making authority to enforce the scope of practice of Denturists to provide the most qualified care to denture patients.

We have made several proposals that would enhance patient access to care and provide all denture patients with access to the most qualified denture providers, as well as proposals to address your concerns. All of which have been met with overwhelming opposition by the dentist members of the Board of Dentistry, and the MDA.

Public care is not enhanced when Denturists are being regulated and dominated by a profession that seeks to destroy them. Early in your deliberations there was sentiment with which we agree that this Board was dysfunctional. With the exception of Mr. Christenot, I would venture to say that there is not a member of the Board of Dentistry who actually understands the dynamics of fabricating a denture, whether it be a full or partial denture, tissue borne, tooth borne, or implant retained and who can perform all of the proper procedures needed to fabricate such dentures. I believe this extends to the majority of dentists as are they not required to prove clinical competency to provide dentures. The state of Montana rigorously tests Denturists on their training, education and experience, prior to granting them a license to practice. I can safely say that is not true for dentistry.

Furthermore, by virtue of the letter from Dr. Chamberlain to Brent Kandarian on behalf of the Board, Denturists are not allowed to question members of the Board on their education in such matters. As a Licensee regulated by the Board of Dentistry, I have the right to know the qualifications and education of the persons judging me. As a patient, you most certainly have the right to know, and would expect no less than the best qualified person to be caring for your needs.

Yet you as a Committee are seeing to it that the public is receiving less than qualified denture care by allowing the Board of Dentistry, the MDA and the ADA to influence your actions. At this point in time, the MDA is promulgating rules and regulations to further restrict the profession of Denturistry and those proposed rules will not only adversely affect the profession, but eliminate the public's choice in denture care and severely limit their access to proper care.

We believe that it is within your purview and your right to sponsor legislation to create regulatory equality between separately licensed professions that have distinctly separate Statutory Practice Acts. I might even say that in order to provide the best service to the citizens of Montana you have the responsibility to do that. In conclusion, I want to say that as a whole, we are not against dentists. We are opposed to the politics dentistry is playing with our profession. On a local level, the system works and there are dentists that are willing to put patient needs above politics. We are once again asking you to do the same.

Thank you.