

5/4/2024

Chairman Kassmier and members of the committee.

Senator Morigeau, EAIC Vice Chairperson

Senator Bogner, EAIC member

Representative Ler, EAIC member,

Thank you for being at the forefront of developing the Montana wine industry! Your time and effort to support and encourage Montana grown grapes and wines is greatly appreciated. I am a vineyard owner in Laurel. I have roughly 3 acres of vines near the shores of the Yellowstone River. My family's endeavor to start a vineyard began in 2014. Here we are 10 years later working towards becoming a winery.

As a grower and budding winery, the proposed legislation would make options available to those of us still developing. By generating revenue early on, we would be able to support the vineyard and expand our operations. This in turn adds value to grape growing and wine making. Growing grapes in Montana is viable, even in the eastern part of the state.

75% Montana grown does not seem like an unfair stretch. Buying local and supporting local producers is very common and popular with Montana residents. By aiming for 75% Montana grown grapes this will help build new agricultural commodities. Grape growing is a hands-on activity, especially at smaller scale vineyards like mine. Encouraging a high percentage of Montana grown grapes will help expand the workforce. All of this can lead to growth and value added crops for Montana agriculture.

#SJ-30

Sincerely,

Aaron Felder

F-3 Vineyard

May 6, 2024

Chairman Kassmier and members of the committee,

Thank you for considering legislation to define Montana wine, most other states officially define their local wines. Other states language and MT Revenue suggests "Produced in Montana from Montana grown grapes, other fruits, or other agricultural products including natural sugar, including honey, 75% of which must be grown in Montana". Growers and Winemakers of grape wines, fruit wines, hard cider or mead may decide to further promote their own specific Ag industry with legislation based on their own members' goals. Officially defining what is locally grown Montana wine sets the foundation for Montana and stakeholders to further develop and encourage Montana's unique local wine industry.

The Montana Grape and Wine Association (MTGWA) just held their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Billings last week. We invited three Billings area wine professionals and conference speaker Greg Cook from North Dakota to evaluate Montana grown wines: Stella Fong, long time food and wine writer and Yellowstone Public Radio regular; Steve Haman, Babcock and Miles wine bar and cafe, Red Lodge; Ashley Nuetgens, head chef at the Northern Hotel TEN restaurant and Greg Cook, 4e Winery, Mapleton, North Dakota. All wine evaluators were incredibly surprised at the diversity and high quality of Montana grown wines. The membership, along with conference speakers and four experienced wine evaluators agreed, Montana is an exceptional, unique place to grow wine grapes when we can produce quality wine like that served at the conference. There was remarkable support for the industry's trade association, WAM, to continue coordinating vineyard-based legislation and pledged to assist in the effort by travelling to Helena and voicing their support.

It has been twenty years since I secured USDA funding for the Flathead Lake Water Quality Initiative assisting orchards and vineyards. This effort which improved irrigation and management for fruit producers led to ten vineyards participating in grape variety trials starting in 2011. A couple marginal variety trial sites reinforced the need to plant these grapes on good vineyard sites for them to survive and ripen properly. Utilizing experts from Cornell and North Dakota State University, who guided us through every aspect of raising grapes in northern climates. We all concurred Montana might be on the verge of something big. As Iowa State and the University of Minnesota would also soon realize, Montana may be the sleeper wine industry, whoever thought Montana would raise some of the best wine from cold hardy grapes? And Now, Montana is set to shake up North America and Canada with "Harbinger", the first totally Montana grape recently licensed for sale by New York's Double A Vineyards, the largest grapevine nursery outside of California! Harbinger ripens 2-3 weeks earlier than many other cold hardy red grapes, a real game changer for cold hardy grapes! AND Montana Grown!

# Patent for Unique Montana Harbinger Grape Variety Nears

Posted on 03/21/2024

.



*Montana Grape & Wine Association* — Longtime Montana Grape & Wine Association supporter and member Dr. Al Putnam of Hamilton said he has received what he considers “good news” about his submission for a patent on the Montana “Harbinger” grape variety.

Dr. Putnam, a retired professor of horticulture, had discovered the new vine in his small vineyard near Corvallis. He recognized the plant was not one he had nurtured and was confident it was likely a wild cross between other varieties in his vineyard.

After tests and trial winemaking, Putnam found the vine had very attractive and promising properties. And as Al reflected, “it made a pretty nice wine.”

The plant was then propagated and a row of vines is growing at the Western Agricultural Research Center at Corvallis under the direction of Dr. Zach Miller and Dr. Andrej Svyantek.

Putnam has submitted the results to the United States Patent Office for consideration as a totally new Montana grape variety. He has named the variety “Harbinger.”

This February he received a communication from the USPO that only a few details of information were needed to complete the process. Al has responded and he hopes to receive the patent soon.

He said he has contacted nurseries for the actual propagation of the vine so it can be offered in larger quantities to Montana growers and other vineyardists.

## **Double A Vineyards**



### *Grape industry innovator*

Located within a few miles of the Lake Erie shoreline near Fredonia, NY, sits one of the country's most sizable grapevine nurseries—the largest outside of California.

The MSU Western Montana Agricultural Experiment Center (WARC) in Corvallis started their grape research program about 10 years ago when Dr. Putnam donated vines for the first “official” university research vineyard in Montana, following the many hardy Montana vineyardists individual research in prior years. Now WARC has a diverse fruit research program and will soon build a new research lab, which will include wine making trials and chemical analysis to aid in developing Montana’s expanding local wine industry. Dr. Zach Miller submitted an update on WARC activities and the economic impact of locally grown wine industries which follows-

To Whom It May Concern.

The Montana State University Western Agricultural Research Center is the state's only research center focused on horticultural research and education. Research at the center has helped pioneer development of new agricultural opportunities for farmers based on growing high value, small-acres horticulture crops such as vegetables, grapes, apples and berries.

Western Agricultural Research Center has worked closely with Montana grape growers and wine makers for the last decade to support the growth of the grape and wine farms and small businesses. We provide critical information on what varieties will grow well in MT variable climates, how to manage the varieties, and how to make them into quality wines.

There’s clear evidence for the potential for this agriculturally based industry in Montana. The first wine grape that could survive the severe winter cold (-20 to -30° F) in Montana, Dakotas and the Upper Midwest were released in the mid-1990’s. Since then, wineries and vineyards in colder regions of the U.S. have experienced substantial growth and now generate 1.6 billion dollars annually in economic activity. In the last 30 years, Iowa and Minnesota have gone from having no wineries to over 100 wineries currently. In Iowa, wineries produced an average of 470,000 gallons of wine in 2019 and 2020. This represents 2.4 million bottles of wine and wine sales (at \$20 per bottle) of nearly \$50 million annually. The grape and wine industries in these states have thrived due to university research and extension and legislative support.

Montana has similar potential for vineyards and wineries, and with the added advantage of a thriving tourist economy. In Montana grape and wine production is small but growing rapidly. The current 54 vineyards in the state have a potential annual production, once vines mature, of 300,000 lbs. of grapes and nearly 114,000 bottles of wine. This represents a value of 2.6 million dollars in grape and wine sales. The number of new vines planted each year tripled from 2017 to 2021. At this rate, by 2030 there will be 100,000 grape vines in the state with the potential to produce 600 tons of grapes and \$18 million in Montana wine sales.

Sincerely,

Dr Zach J Miller

I do believe Now is the time to act! Passing legislation defining Montana wine in state code will help usher in sustained, rural economic growth through the development of a Montana grown wine industry.

Thank you for your consideration,

Larry Robertson

Flathead Lake Vineyard & Winery

President, Winery Association of Montana

Founding and current board member,

Montana Grape and Wine Association

May 6, 2024

Chairman Kassmier and members of the committee,

We, Alyssa and Ben Griffith, the owners of Watchdog Winery, LLC, a small vineyard and winery operation in Sander's County, would like to express our support of the efforts of the Montana Winery Association in updating and creating opportunities for this budding industry. We support the committee legislation defining Montana wine, similarly to what other states have done. This legislation builds on the partnership with Montana Department of Agriculture to help our industry grow and develop the local identity of Montana made wine.

The ability to create an industry within Montana to fully encompass and round out the state's robust farming operations attracted us to return to Montana to develop an agriculture-based business that would take advantage of our unique and often time harsh environment to produce a product that adds to the diversity of what Montana already produces. While cattle would have been an obvious choice, we fell in love with the steak compliment found in wine. While we understand that Montana is not known for its wine production, yet, we saw and see the ability to be pioneers in the industry.

We are in it for the long haul as we made our vine selections in 2015 for a 2017 planting. Since 2017, we have endured the trials and tribulations associated with a specialty crop, we lost vines due to weather, found vines that were vigorous, and endured small production years because of wildlife exchanges. The awarding of a Specialty Crop Block matching grant truly allowed us a chance to turn an acre of pasture into a vineyard to concrete our grape production before we committed to a winery. We are happy to report that we have succeeded in creating a productive vineyard and in 2021 took on our winery license to expand on and add to the good thing that we have started.

We are a State and Federally licensed winery, with a focus on using our Montana grown grapes to create wines to showcase what Montana has to offer. We are excited about updates to the Montana Legislature that would allow us to showcase the Montana grown and made wines as we are a unique industry. To increase our efficiency as growing and production business, we are rurally based as our vines take up more space than available in an urban setting. Second to that we have limited ourselves to be a commercial, not open to the public, winery because of our location. While we are in a beautiful location along the Flathead River, we are not in the busy downtown of a major urban area. This has some advantages, however, trying to grow and create an industry of any size, the seclusion has major drawbacks in terms of getting our wines in the hands of the public. With the ability to open opportunities at farmer's markets would greatly excel our ability to be showcased as a growing agriculture-based industry with great promise.

Finally, to grow the industry to maturity, we need to entice others to grow grapes as we are severely lacking the tons of grape production that is needed to create a self-supporting industry. The bottom line is that we need help to incentivize the growing of grapes and other wine fruits. This is not an overnight change as grape production is plant it today and harvest a crop in 3 to 5 years, which is a long game in terms of any other agricultural endeavor, and any ability to open the grape gates would be well received.

We are looking to grow our business in both acres planted as well as bottles of wine produced. The only way forward is to increase our ability to get our Montana grown and produced wines in the hands of the masses. We look forward to new opportunities and abilities starting with committee legislation defining Montana wine as Montana grown, and building our industry through vineyard based licensing as well as allowing our presence at the table.

Alyssa and Ben Griffith  
Watchdog Winery LLC  
(406) 544-2945  
10143 Highway 200  
Dixon, MT 59831



Stella Fong  
2935 Rimview Drive  
Billings, Montana 59102

May 6, 2024

Member of the Economic Affairs Interim Committee  
c/o Erin Sullivan, Economic Affairs Interim Committee Research Analyst

Dear Members of the Economic Affairs Interim Committee,

Over the past twenty years I have written about the food and beverage scene in Montana. Here, under the Big Sky, it was only recently that the local bounty was embraced. Deliciousness abounds here and all it takes is for the treasures to be noticed and allowed to flourish. This is true in the arena of grapes and wine.

I had the opportunity to taste many Montana made wines over the years. However, it was not until two weeks ago that my eyes were truly opened to the tremendous progress that had been made in the growing of grapes and the making of wines here while attending the Montana Grape and Winery Association (MTGWA) meeting in Billings.

I tasted wines from around the state from established facilities such as the Tongue River Winery in Miles City, Willow Mountain Winery in Corvallis, Flathead Lake Winery in Polson, White Raven Winery in Columbia Falls, and Watchdog Winery in Dixon. Growers from F Bar 3 Vineyard in Laurel and North Slope Vineyard in Billings also crafted wines that showed promise to compete on the international market.

Mother Nature may challenge the growing process more in Montana but she has not dissuaded those who grow wheat, barley, lentil, cherries and apples. Those who have moved forward to accept the challenge of growing grapes have been successful in finding the varieties that will survive the extreme weather. They have investigated and researched the growing techniques required for the fruition of their grapes. Many have explored wine making techniques to produce well crafted wines that show balance and highlight the land that the grapes have matured on.

The state of Montana now needs to put the legislation in place to define Montana wine and policies in place for vineyard agriculture which currently exist successfully in other states. Our state has always been the home of pioneers and having guidelines in place will only help in fermenting success.

Sincerely,



Stella Fong  
Writer, Radio Host, and Culinary Instructor

May 4, 2024

To: Chairman Kassmier and EAIC committee members

RE: SJ30- Legislation Defining Montana Wine

We firmly support the committee's proposed legislation defining Montana wine, to help build awareness and for the state to encourage building this locally grown, value-added wine industry. This will also help support future Montana legislation regarding the licensing of farm/vineyard-based wineries in the State.

Our small family farm planting is now over 2.5 Ac with more than 600 vines. Our goal is to plant about 6 Ac with a total of 3600 vines. We will have third leaf on our initial planting, and hope to have a small harvest this season.

We have been in the permitting process now for the last two years. We have received TTB basic permit, FDA registration, and State Wholesale food manufacturer initial Satisfactory review.

We have been pending State Winery license application while we await the rewrite of our subdivision (COSA) to permit commercial activities, and DEQ re-permitting the existing water well from a shared use to multi-use designation.

We are remodeling an existing structure on the property to use as our winery facility. While we are not "open to the public", the architect has advised a requirement to have an ADA bathroom. This has been included in the remodel.

The building permit for the remodel took nine months. Scheduling with Master tradesmen has taken over six months. The COSA and well designation have been in process for 15 months. We are tentatively optimistic that we may have

our State license by November of this year. The process to license a vineyard based, agricultural processing facility has been frustrating. Maybe the state could help to educate and standardize licensing vineyard production wineries at the county level as our industry moves forward.

The proposed committee legislation defining Montana wine fits in well with and supports our value-added winery and any future proposed farm winery legislation would also directly impact our operation, for the better. The ability to use local small business incubators (Farmer's Markets) for retail sales would be an incredible benefit to introduce our product to the market. Grow local, know local and sell local is the cornerstone of Farmer's Market booths. Special permits would have better customer exposure when used for conferences, festivals and larger wine centered events. Defining Montana wine could help facilitate expanding vineyards and MT grown wineries in Montana.

Thank you for your attention in the matter.

Peter Tyler and Amy Schneider

Flynt Aero Vineyards & Winery, LLC

14 Flynt Aero Place

Plains, Montana 59859

(406) 209-8854

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 7, 2024 11:45 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 7th April 2024 11:45

**First Name:**

Shawna

**Last Name:**

Kugler-Ohman, RDH LAP

**Email Address:**

shawna\_kugler@yahoo.com

**Subject:**

MAR Notice No. 24-138-84, LAP Hygienists

**Comment:**

I am contacting you in regards to an excerpt of an important and concerning email I received recently... "The Economic Interim Affairs Committee has "informally objected" to the Board of Dentistry's rule (which was a unanimous vote to support) to specify additional facilities for LAPs – including Title I and 65% or greater free and reduced lunch schools, domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, and hospice facilities. There is no valid reason for the EAIC to do this, as all procedures were correctly followed by the Board of Dentistry. " I know there can be many questions regarding allowing dental scope of practice in various community settings. I want to touch base with you to let you know that what you are deciding will have a huge impact on our communities and more so our children's lives. I've lived in Montana for 24 years, and have lived and worked in Kalispell as a Registered Dental Hygienist for the last 12 yrs. I currently have my LAP distinction on my license. I see multiple opportunities where this would be extremely beneficial for our Flathead Valley community and ALL Montana communities. Denying access to care only shows your constituents that our state does not care for our overall wellbeing, which absolutely includes dental services. If there have been dentists that have told you otherwise, I would strongly encourage you to look into the reasons why dentists would not want access to dental care for EVERY Montana resident. Most dentists have made it very clear that they don't even know what LAP Hygienists do! Please feel free to view the attached video that shares important vital information and statistics regarding LAP dental access, and it's importance. <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/u9C1XhrenHwkJo9i/?mibextid=oFDknk> My personal cell number is:406-249-4865 I would be happy to speak personally with anyone who may have any specific questions/concerns regarding what LAP hygienists do. Best regards, Shawna Kugler-Ohman, RDH, LAP MDHA KALISPELL COMPONENT TRUSTEE

Sent via [www.leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](http://www.leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

## Sullivan, Erin

---

**From:** Diedri Durocher <diedri@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 10:55 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Erin  
**Subject:** Public Comment/Photos for EAIC

You don't often get email from diedri@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Erin,

I would appreciate it if you could forward this to the entire EAIC, regarding LAPs in public schools.

Dear EAI Committee Members,

I am writing to urge you to allow MAR 138-24-84 to continue forth in the rulemaking process. I am a dental hygienist with LAP certification.

A few years ago, I worked in a school-based program on a Montana Indian Reservation. I saw kids every 3-6 months. The only kids I was allowed to see were the ones whose parents or guardians completed a thorough health history form and gave signed consent. The school had a clinic area, so kids only missed about 30 minutes of class when they would see me. I would get the kids from class and walk them back, and did not create extra work for teachers. Most kids had a difficult time getting to a dentist on a regular basis, whether it was because parents couldn't get time off work, or lack of reliable transportation, or not being educated on the importance of preventive care and regular checkups. The following pictures are of a student I saw. This elementary student had a bombed out molar (1<sup>st</sup> picture) most likely past the point where it could be fixed, and probably needed extraction. The student had probable decay in several other teeth (2<sup>nd</sup> picture), and it appeared that a tooth was abscessed and infected at the root (3<sup>rd</sup> picture). I am not a dentist, and therefore I am not allowed to diagnose. That being said, I assume even you all can identify that things don't look good and that this child needed care. This is NOT OK and could have been prevented! I spent a lot of time on the phone educating the child's parent/guardian about the need for immediate treatment by a dentist, and I alerted the local dentist that this child needed to be seen ASAP. Abscessed teeth can lead to death. No joke! Children in Montana have died from an abscessed tooth, even in recent years. If this child had been seen at a younger age in the school setting, this may have all been prevented, or at the very least would not have gotten to such a horrible condition.

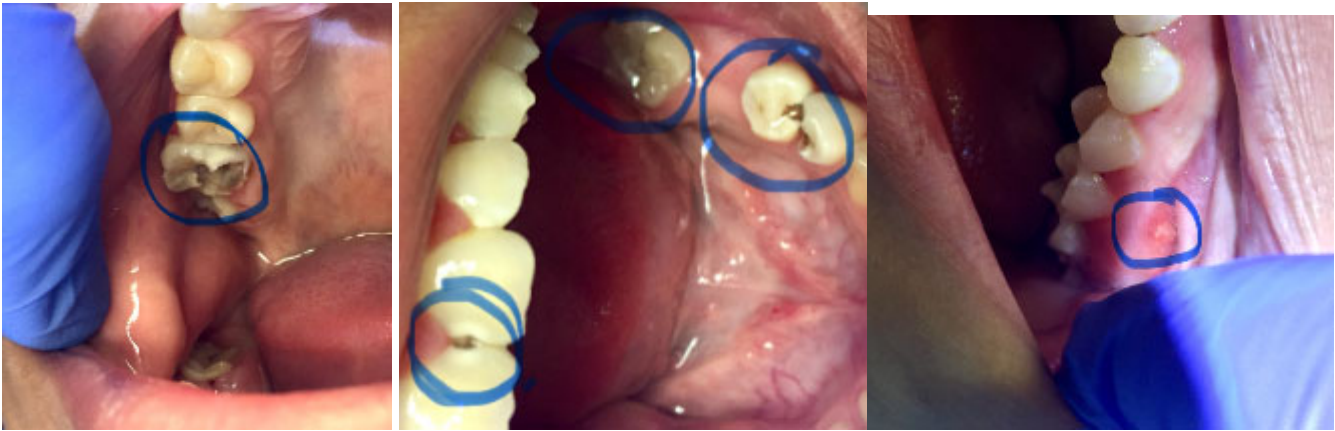
Please ask yourself:

Is it better that nobody looks in the mouth? Is that the way we can pretend that Montana's low income children don't have problems?

Is it ethical to stall the rulemaking process, when the board followed procedures correctly?

Are you doing what is right for your constituents, especially the ones who don't have the privilege of getting regular care at a dentist's office?

I assume all of you can get regular care for yourself and your families. That is fantastic and ideal! But this isn't about people like you, it is LIMITED to those who cannot get regular dental care due to financial constraints, age, disability or infirmity.



I am available for any questions or discussions.  
Please contact me at your convenience.

Diedri Durocher  
Great Falls MT  
Senate District 10 (Fitzpatrick)  
House District 19 (Miner)  
406-781-4473  
diedri@hotmail.com

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 3:05 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 30th April 2024 15:04

**First Name:**  
Rosaleen

**Last Name:**  
Handl

**Email Address:**  
rosaleenegwalsh@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

Please pass the proposed rule defining what additional facilities qualify for LAP services, including Title 1 public schools, public schools with 65% or greater free and reduced lunch, domestic violence shelters, hospice facilities, and homeless shelters. As a practicing LAP registered dental Hygienist, I see first-hand how important our services are. Although my focus remains on the elderly, I see how beneficial it is to have all the licensed and capable hands working for the underserved as possible. One of the biggest misunderstandings about LAP hygienists is that we are competition for dentists with private practices. My experience tells me this is a major misconception. The simple, sad truth is that the people (young and elderly) seen by LAP hygienists aren't being seen by anyone. They have no dental home. The underserved community members that LAP hygienists help aren't getting into any dental professional unless the dental professional goes to them. Unfortunately, there is a dental professional shortage. A few noteworthy points include: - 55% of eligible Medicaid children, age 1-20, do not receive preventive dental care (2020) -10 of the 35 Montana frontier counties do not have a practicing dentist (2021) -41 of the 56 Montana counties are designated as dental health provider shortage shortage areas -Approximately 360 of 825 schools in Montana would qualify for LAP services As you can see, the more qualified professionals available to help these populations, the better! Additionally, according to the CDC, using school-based programs to provide sealants to roughly 7 million low-income children who lack them could save up to \$300 million in dental treatment costs in America. In short, besides being the morally right thing to do, it's also the financially responsible thing to do.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9:35 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 30th April 2024 21:34

**First Name:**  
Christine

**Last Name:**  
Armstrong

**Email Address:**  
healthysmilehappyheart@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

Hello, I am writing to you in support of the rule to allow dental hygienists to offer services to at-risk/low income kids in schools. I don't believe that there is any reason why this service should not be offered to parents. The Family Resource Center in every school sends kids home with food every weekend so that they do not go without, they provide resources to parents, and along with staff and counselors serve as a support system for the kids. They see what services at risk families make a priority and what services they do not. Poor dental health is not a new problem for the kids who are truly in need, having the possibility of a dental hygienist who would be available to these kids at school is supportive and necessary. Not all schools will be fortunate enough to have a dental hygienist with the credentials in their doors. The schools that are supported by a dental hygienist would be so grateful for the care that is provided. Missing 25 minutes of class or recess is not going to impact test scores significantly. However, missing an entire day or two of school because of a toothache from a cavity that could have been prevented certainly will impact learning goals. These kids deserve the opportunity and these families deserve the choice. Please vote to pass the rule to allow dental hygienists with a Limited Access Permit to offer services to kids who are in need.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)



**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9:28 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 30th April 2024 21:27

**First Name:**  
Holly

**Last Name:**  
Coppock

**Email Address:**  
hollynolivia@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**  
I am a parent and I support dental hygienists in schools.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 7:32 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 30th April 2024 19:31

**First Name:**  
Naomi

**Last Name:**  
Nash

**Email Address:**  
nnashlibby@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
LAP scope for dental hygienists

**Comment:**

If you've remember a toothache, had a child or parent or grandparent with poor dental health, you know how important preventative dental care is! Don't restrict what is making a difference. Dental care is health care. LAP hygienists and their teams are reaching those who require dental care the most. I've witnessed school based care for kids in our community that otherwise wouldn't be able to get the treatment they desperately deserve! Clinic offices cannot cover all that these professionals provide. It's a question of being part of the problem (lack of services, time, transportation and costs) verses being part of the solution (bringing services to patients and convenience instead of time away from work, school or other family to provide dental care where it's most needed across Montana) don't limit care! LAP designation is critical care!

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 7:07 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 30th April 2024 19:07

**First Name:**  
Margie

**Last Name:**  
Reap

**Email Address:**  
neatfulofchicks@msn.com

**Subject:**  
Dental hygiene in schools

**Comment:**  
My grandchildren deserve affordable and accessible dental care, focused in prevention. I care for a child under school age, I do not have the ability to pack up and travel to appointments. Having providers that can go to the school for my other grandchildren is needed. Dentists are not providing this service. We need dental providers that will. Please remove the informal objection and keep Montana children healthy.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 6:59 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 30th April 2024 18:58

**First Name:**  
Kirk

**Last Name:**  
Stetson

**Email Address:**  
kb.stetson@hotmail.com

**Subject:**  
proposed rule MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

As a now retired dentist who has been part of a school based prevention program, I was both astounded and dismayed at the amount of need within our large state. The number of kids who are unable to get to a dental office, due to financial constraints, parents unable to take time off work, or lack of a dentist in their area is exponential. During my time spent in public health, it was quickly apparent to me that there is no way that all children throughout Montana can and will be taken care of by a "dental home". These children have no control of their environment as they have no control of whether or not they will be seen by a dentist. Patient Care Agreements are adding more barriers and only contributing to the problem. Requiring Patient Care Agreements between an LAP hygienist and a dentist will only make things more difficult. It will reduce access to care, especially for kids who don't live in a populated area. In addition, I don't know many dentists who would be willing to accept liability for all the students in need. This was and continues to be a concern in offices who do accept Medicaid, although few and far between. Dental offices who do take NEW Medicaid patients are dwindling, therefore, to have 1 office now agreeing to treat all children who do not have a dental home, is not an appropriate solution. When I was in private practice, although I did take Medicaid, if this was the only option to bring access to care to children, I certainly would have not physically been able to take on dozens of new patients. We know there are dentists in Montana, but there are questions we need to ask. Will every dentist sign up as a Medicaid provider? Very likely not. Will we have support for families who do not have dependable transportation? Where will that money come from? How about the unfortunate circumstances where a child has no parent/guardian capable of getting them to their appointments? Is it that child's fault? No. This is a simple solution, allow LAP hygienists to do what they are licensed, tested and trained to do, without the barriers of requiring these agreements. Parents, as with all patients, deserve to have a choice in where and from whom they receive preventive care. I have seen the excellent care LAP hygienists give, and I know Montanans would benefit from LAPs providing care in the additional facilities defined by the Board of Dentistry in the proposed rule MAR 24-138-84. Thank you for your time on this matter.  
Kirk Stetson, DDS

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](http://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:06 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 09:05

**First Name:**

Aly

**Last Name:**

Nielsen

**Email Address:**

aly.nielsen@icloud.com

**Subject:**

MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

As someone who grew up below the poverty line in rural Montana I believe strongly that basic healthcare does belong in schools and greatly benefits children who, through no fault of their own, do not have access to it. I also believe that most - if not all- of our school teachers want what's best for their students both academically and medically and would not object to the access to care.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 7:36 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 07:36

**First Name:**  
Angela

**Last Name:**  
Bridegam

**Email Address:**  
abridegam@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**  
I'm a parent in support of dental hygienists in schools. Thanks, Angela Bridegam

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 12:16 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 12:15

**First Name:**  
Timothy

**Last Name:**  
Miller

**Email Address:**  
rellimmit@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Dental Hygienists in Schools

**Comment:**

I urge the committee to support allowing Registered Dental Hygienists to provide basic dental hygiene for students in schools. This could be accomplished for some students with minimal to no disruption to their education. For example, scheduling exams or cleaning before or after school or during recess. As a retired teacher and administrator, I recall children missing important lessons in school due to tooth decay and pain. Allowing RDHs to support children in schools is smart and economical preventative care.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)



**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 11:25 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 11:24

**First Name:**  
Mary

**Last Name:**  
Dombrowski

**Email Address:**  
mdombrowski0@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Dental Care in Schools

**Comment:**  
As an public elementary school teachers, we know the deep value of dental healthcare in my students, especially our at-risk students. Students who have quality healthcare show up to school ready to learn. Providing regular cleanings and check-ups in school prevents children from dangerous oral disease. Montana children are particularly at risk. Please allow dental hygienists to care for these children so they can get back to learning and thriving in our schools. Providing healthcare for our most vulnerable population is not only practical, but it is simply the right thing to do.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 10:46 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 10:45

**First Name:**  
Kristi

**Last Name:**  
Wadsworth

**Email Address:**  
redmarshall2005@yahoo.com

**Subject:**  
LAP in schools

**Comment:**

I urge you to allow the rule to let LAPs work in low income public schools. I am the mother of a 3rd grader at Valley View Elementary in Great Falls and a high schooler. Valley View is a Title 1 school. My husband is an auto body repair man and cannot take time off during the day. I work at a job where I don't get any benefits, like time off to take kids to appointments. If I don't work, I don't get paid. We work very hard to make ends meet, but it keeps getting harder with inflation and poor benefits. We recently lost our dental insurance. Having a LAP provide dental hygiene services to my child at school would be very beneficial to us, as it would save us money out of pocket for a cleaning, and we wouldn't lose income from me having to take time off to get her to and from an appointment. She already gets speech therapy at school, and that has been wonderful. She misses very little class time, definitely less time than if she had to go off-campus to an appointment! I have always gotten my and my kids teeth cleaned by a dental hygienist. I trust her and appreciate the time she takes to educate my kids on how to take care of their teeth. I deserve to choose who cleans my child's teeth, as well as which dentist we want to go to. Let this rule happen, and let parents have a choice.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:52 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 16:52

**First Name:**  
Rebecca

**Last Name:**  
Belsom

**Email Address:**  
beckybelsom@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

I was pleased to hear that the Board of Dentistry unanimously approved to have dentist hygienists in the schools. Much like we provide hearing and vision screenings, how helpful it would be to provide dental hygiene support to the children who need it most. As a parent, I know firsthand how costly this care can be for families. As a healthcare provider I understand the importance dental hygiene has on a person's whole health. Please reconsider your objection to allowing dental hygienists in the schools.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 3:59 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 1st May 2024 15:58

**First Name:**

Amy

**Last Name:**

Barrett

**Email Address:**

barrett\_a17@yahoo.com

**Subject:**

Dental hygiene in schools

**Comment:**

As a mom and a registered nurse. I fully support having a dental hygienist available to school aged kids who don't have the opportunity.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 1:45 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 2nd May 2024 13:44

**First Name:**  
Katrina

**Last Name:**  
Chaney

**Email Address:**  
kchaney@lccountymt.gov

**Subject:**  
Allowing Dental Hygienists to help with preventative care in schools

**Comment:**  
I implore the committee to lend its support to the inclusion of Registered Dental Hygienists in providing essential dental hygiene services to students within schools. This can be seamlessly integrated into their educational routines with minimal disruption. For instance, examinations or cleanings could be scheduled before or after school, or during recess periods. Reflecting on my tenure as both a teacher and administrator, I vividly recall instances where children missed pivotal learning opportunities due to dental ailments like decay and pain. Facilitating RDHs to aid children in schools exemplifies a prudent and economically viable strategy for preventive care.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 1:37 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 2nd May 2024 13:37

**First Name:**  
Erin

**Last Name:**  
Lipkind

**Email Address:**  
elipkind@missoulacounty.us

**Subject:**  
Support for Allowing Registered Dental Hygienists to Work in Schools

**Comment:**

Dear Legislators, I am writing to urge your support for the integration of Registered Dental Hygienists (RDHs) into school settings to provide essential dental hygiene services for students. This initiative holds immense promise in promoting the overall health and well-being of our student population while minimizing disruptions to their education. The presence of RDHs in schools offers a practical solution to address dental health issues among students. By allowing RDHs to conduct check-ups and cleanings on-site, we can effectively mitigate the prevalence of dental problems such as decay and pain that often lead to missed school days and hindered learning opportunities. As a former teacher and current administrator, I have witnessed firsthand the detrimental impact that untreated dental issues can have on a student's academic performance and overall well-being. Moreover, integrating RDHs into schools aligns with a cost-effective and preventive approach to healthcare. By providing early intervention and education on proper dental hygiene practices, RDHs can help instill lifelong habits that contribute to improved oral health outcomes for our students. This proactive approach not only reduces the burden on our healthcare system but also ensures that students are equipped with the knowledge and resources they need to maintain optimal dental health throughout their lives. In addition to its health benefits, allowing RDHs to work in schools demonstrates a commitment to equity and accessibility in healthcare. By bringing dental services directly to students, regardless of their socioeconomic status or access to healthcare, we can help bridge the gap in oral health disparities and ensure that all students have equal opportunities to thrive academically and personally. In conclusion, I strongly urge you to support legislation that enables Registered Dental Hygienists to work in schools. By doing so, we can empower our students to lead healthier lives, enhance their educational experiences, and pave the way for a brighter, more equitable future for all. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Sincerely, Erin Lipkind

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 2:44 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 2nd May 2024 14:43

**First Name:**  
Pam

**Last Name:**  
Birkeland

**Email Address:**  
pambirkeland@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Dental care in schools

**Comment:**

Dear committee members, Please lend your support for the inclusion of Registered Dental Hygienists in providing essential dental hygiene services to students within schools. This can be easily integrated into their educational routines with minimal disruption. For instance, examinations or cleanings could be scheduled before or after school, or during recess periods. As both a teacher and administrator, I have encountered many instances where children missed pivotal learning opportunities due to dental ailments like decay and pain. A child whose teeth are in pain has a lesser chance of learning. Facilitating RDHs to aid children in schools exemplifies a prudent and economically viable strategy for preventive care. Sincerely, Pam Birkeland

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 4:06 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 2nd May 2024 16:05

**First Name:**  
Timothy

**Last Name:**  
Tharp

**Email Address:**  
timtharpmt@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Registered Dental Hygienists providing services to children

**Comment:**  
Members of the Economic Affairs Interim Committee, I understand that there was a preliminary no vote in allowing registered dental hygienists from providing some basic services to students. This is a program that we had when I served as a rural Supt in North Dakota and it was very well received by parents, staff, and students. Nobody gets any services without prior written parental permission, and we found that it caught many issues for kids who did not have regular dental care. I'd love to discuss the reasons anyone may have voted against this. Please reconsider.  
tim.tharp@richland.org or timtharpmt@gmail.com

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)



**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 4:41 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 2nd May 2024 16:41

**First Name:**  
Carolyn

**Last Name:**  
Hall

**Email Address:**  
lacosupt@lakemt.gov

**Subject:**  
Limited Access Permit Dental Hygienists to work in schools with low income students

**Comment:**  
Support MAR Notice No.24-138-84 I implore the committee to lend its support to the inclusion of Registered Dental Hygienists in providing essential dental hygiene services to students within schools. This can be seamlessly integrated into their educational routines with minimal disruption. For instance, examinations or cleanings could be scheduled before or after school, or during recess periods. If we can avoid children additional absentees for children that already are candidates for chronic absenteeism, why wouldn't we want to do the practical thing? Facilitating RDHs to aid children in schools is an excellent example of supporting children with few resources for preventative care.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 8:42 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 3rd May 2024 08:42

**First Name:**  
Maggie

**Last Name:**  
Matteson

**Email Address:**  
magzmax@yahoo.com

**Subject:**  
Dental care

**Comment:**  
Access to affordable dental care is needed now.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 8:44 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 3rd May 2024 08:43

**First Name:**

Cara

**Last Name:**

Reck

**Email Address:**

Cara.reck@gmail.com

**Subject:**

Dental Hygienists Patient Care Agreement

**Comment:**

I worked with a nonprofit for approximately 7 years that provided preventative services for kids in schools throughout Montana. Although we worked side by side with dentists, not every LAP is afforded that luxury. With grant funding, we were able to pay our partnering dentists a good wage for their time spent performing teledentistry as well as being onsite providing exams and diagnosing children so we could send referrals to local and neighboring offices. This isn't something that an LAP would necessarily be able to do. Many of the LAP hygienists are already working a part time or full time job within a dental office, providing care for our most vulnerable populations on their days off. They don't always have the time and resources to write grants to be able to recruit a "collaborative dentist" to make it appealing to them to partner. Many times my colleagues and I spent hours on the phone to find a dental office to take one child for emergency care due to an abscess, severe decay and pain. We heard from offices they are not a Medicaid office, they do not accept any new Medicaid, or in one case a COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC stated they cannot see patients for "complete care". They would see them for emergencies, but as a dental home? Nope. And this was a federally funded facility!!! What makes you think one dental office would be able to support an agreement with an LAP seeing dozens of children? We all know exactly what this is about. It's about money. It isn't about the safety and well being of our children. We know hygienists have been able to go into schools for years under general supervision. Patient Care Agreements are essentially the LAP version of private practice hygienists working under general supervision. If we have been able to work under general supervision to go into schools and not one dentist has offered that service and partnered with a hygienist, what makes you think this will be any different?! Montana has always been forward thinking, ahead of the game, but yet our children still have an exceptionally high rate of tooth decay!!! This is not allowing kids to reach their highest potential in school as they battle tooth pain, missing school for dental procedures that all could have been prevented. Putting these Care Agreements on the requirements is only going to move us backwards, kids won't get the care they need and deserve, and it would only put us in an even worse position for childhood tooth decay. Please don't place this barrier on our LAP hygienists! The ones who ARE willing to help their communities and the children living in them!! All of these children have consents signed by a parent/guardian and all must be referred to a dental home. In

our program, after a child's first visit, we made contact with the parent/guardian to discuss the needs of the child and if they needed sealants we always asked verbally on top of the signed consent saying we could place them. Notes home always stated that the child needed to be seen in a dental home, but that we would also see the child in 3 months to assess any other concerns or note any treatment that was completed. This gave the families the freedom to go where they wish for treatment. Some families traveled, but that is what they chose to do. Some did not seek care, but we always had eyes on the child. In these cases we were able to work with the school counselor/administration depending on the severity of needs. This was all done without a care agreement with any specific office. I urge you to consider my testimony before really sending our state back in time. Thank you for your time, Respectfully, Cara Reck, BS, RDH, LAP

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](http://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 10:22 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 3rd May 2024 10:22

**First Name:**

Whitney

**Last Name:**

Round

**Email Address:**

whitneyr@orimt.org

**Subject:**

Dental Hygienist

**Comment:**

I'm a Medical Coordinator for few groups home with adults with disabilities. Most of my clients are in wheelchair and it makes it difficult to go the dentist. Having the dental hygienist come to client house is nice because it lets the clients be in comfort at their home. Also, it lets the hygienist take there time.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 11:46 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 3rd May 2024 11:45

**First Name:**  
Diedri

**Last Name:**  
Durocher

**Email Address:**  
montanadha@msn.com

**Subject:**  
Rule Review: MAR Notice Number: 24-138-84

**Comment:**

Reason for rule change, printed in Notice, as required by MAPA: REASON: In 2021 the board discussed moving forward with proposing amendments to this rule by evaluating schools under a two-part test prior to adding additional schools as board defined public health facilities or programs under 37-4 405, MCA. The board never formally began the rulemaking process under the Montana Administrative Procedures Act as the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry received a request for active supervision of the potential rule amendments under 37-1-121 and 37-1-122, MCA. As required by the department's active supervision process, the commissioner requested information from the board regarding its proposal. After receiving the board's response, the commissioner requested supplemental information from the board. In its supplementary response, the board considered proposing amendments to require a collaborative agreement structure between dentists and hygienists relating to LAP hygienists' work. In February 2022 following her analysis of public comments, professional association comments, and the information provided by the board, the commissioner determined that access to oral healthcare is a continuing issue in Montana, especially among American Indian and low-income children; and, that the public health concerns that led to creation of the LAP still existed in 2021. The commissioner further determined the language in the potential rule proposal was not taken pursuant to a clearly articulated state policy and that the rule unduly restrained the trade of dental hygienists. The commissioner's opinion noted the proposal was devoid of any process by which a new facility may be named. As to the board's suggestion of a collaborative agreement, the commissioner noted that while the board may disagree with the Legislature's determination of the scope of practice for an LAP, it may not contravene legislative determinations that LAP practice is permitted. The commissioner disapproved of the proposed rule language and no changes to the board's rule were enacted. To address the issues noted by the commissioner, the board is proposing these amendments to allow for a more general guidance for approved facilities, rather than listing individual locations. The board proposes using federal guidelines for free or reduced lunch and Title I funding for schools in defining facilities and programs. This is based on research staff and the board conducted on the laws in other states which allow for similar practice and methodology to identify students who may not receive regular dental care due to the financial constraints of their parents. Additionally,

the board is adding hospice facilities in (2)(c) to correspond with the nursing homes, long term care facilities, and home health agencies as already defined by the Legislature in 37-4-405, MCA. The board is including family violence and homeless shelters under (2)(d) as those facilities contain "patients or residents of facilities or programs who, due to age, infirmity, disability, or financial constraints, are unable to receive regular dental care". Finally, the board is proposing to repeal sections (2), (3), and (4) as they are unnecessarily duplicative of existing rules that address application procedures, continuing education, and renewals. Question: What statute that allows an interim committee to supersede the will of the Legislature? I have searched MAPA and I am not finding one.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](http://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 8:47 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 3rd May 2024 20:47

**First Name:**  
Samantha

**Last Name:**  
Reap

**Email Address:**  
sreap.7@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Affordable Dental Care MT!

**Comment:**  
As a medical professional, I understand the importance of dental care. Good oral health is essential for an individual's overall health and well-being. The oral cavity is the first place where our nutrition gets digested and makes it easier for all the cells in the body to utilize their minerals/vitamins/acids for proper functioning. Without proper oral health and dental care, an individual's health is at risk of dis-eases. Due to this important fact, access to affordable dental care is necessary for Montana's population.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)



**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 8:53 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 3rd May 2024 20:52

**First Name:**  
Sandee

**Last Name:**  
Garner

**Email Address:**  
sandeegarner@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Affordable dental care

**Comment:**  
Our state could really use affordable dental care!

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 4, 2024 3:34 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 4th May 2024 15:33

**First Name:**  
Steven

**Last Name:**  
Torcoletti

**Email Address:**  
torcoletti@aol.com

**Subject:**  
Dental Hygienist LAPs in the Schools

**Comment:**

I am in support of allowing Dental Hygienist LAPs seeing children in schools. Poor dental health can lead to many different health problems and many of our children struggle to get the proper care they need. Children in discomfort or pain from dental caries are not able to concentrate in school and become the best students then can be. I taught school for several years and it was evident that some children were not able to receive necessary dental care because of financial reasons or the lack of access to dental professionals. Having LAPs in the schools would make a big difference in the lives of affected children and their families. LAPs will not only provide Dental Hygiene services, but they will be able to screen the children and refer on to dentists as necessary. Since only children with parental permission would participate, the process would not be a forced mandate on all children. I am sure that school staff could accommodate the limited number of children who would be participating by working around the existing school schedule. I see this as a win-win as there is minimal state expense and maximum health benefits for the affected children. I encourage the Committee to support having LAPs in the schools.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 5, 2024 7:16 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 5th May 2024 07:16

**First Name:**

Anna

**Last Name:**

Fagan

**Email Address:**

annarose01@gmail.com

**Subject:**

Dental hygienists in schools

**Comment:**

I am a mom in Missoula with a child in middle school and a child in high school. While I am lucky enough to have dental insurance and the ability to get my kids to the dentist, I know that other families are not so lucky. I feel that having hygienists visit schools is a great thing for kids who wouldn't otherwise have regular dental visits. Please consider having them in our schools. Here are some things to consider: Tooth decay is the #1 chronic illness in American children and it is largely PREVENTABLE -Montana children have higher rates of decay than average -LAPs have been providing preventive care to people of all ages, infants to elderly for 21 years in Montana -There have been ZERO founded complaints against LAPs in the 21 years. -LAPs already see kids in Head Starts, youth group homes, migrant programs, FQHCs (including FQHC clinics within schools), mobile health clinics -LAPs must have malpractice insurance -Research shows children with oral health problems are more likely to miss school and perform poorly in school -Research shows that oral disease is the number one reason why children miss school -Research shows that low-income children are twice as likely to suffer from untreated decay (which is preventable) than higher-income students -Children miss less school when seen in a school-based environment -55% of eligible Medicaid children, age 1-20, do not receive preventive dental care (2020) -10 of the 35 Montana frontier counties do not have a practicing dentist (2021) -41 of the 56 Montana counties are designated as dental health provider shortage shortage areas -Approximately 360 of 825 schools in Montana would qualify for LAP services -LAPs must be invited into a school by administration and school board -LAPs must get parental consent and detailed medical history before seeing a child -Parents should have a CHOICE from whom they want their child to receive preventive dental services -According to the CDC, using school-based programs to provide sealants to roughly 7 million low-income children who lack them could save up to \$300 million in dental treatment costs in America -Healthcare in schools allows better access to care for the most vulnerable. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 5, 2024 9:42 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 5th May 2024 09:41

**First Name:**  
Lisa

**Last Name:**  
Rosberg

**Email Address:**  
lrosberg@parkcounty.org

**Subject:**  
Registered Dental Hygienists providing essential dental hygiene services in schools

**Comment:**  
I implore the committee to lend its support to the inclusion of Registered Dental Hygienists in providing essential dental hygiene services to students within schools. This can be seamlessly integrated into their educational routines with minimal disruption. For instance, examinations or cleanings could be scheduled before or after school, or during recess periods. Reflecting on my tenure as both a teacher and administrator, I vividly recall instances where children missed pivotal learning opportunities due to dental ailments like decay and pain. Facilitating RDHs to aid children in schools exemplifies a prudent and economically viable strategy for preventive care.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, May 6, 2024 8:21 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 6th May 2024 08:20

**First Name:**  
William

**Last Name:**  
Samson

**Email Address:**  
willsamsondds@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
Limited Access Permit Hygienist Expansion of Treatment Sites

**Comment:**

I believe we have a significant amount of underserved individuals throughout our great state. I believe these individuals reside in both urban and rural areas. Our incredible LAP hygienists can help the access to care issues these people face. From dental screenings, placement of fluoride and referral to dentists, the LAP hygienist is a very valuable part of our dental team. I have spoken to several LAP hygienists and am saddened by the paperwork and administrative burden they are put under. I would like to see the schools, the nurses, and other community dentists assist them in their valuable work. I believe this is not just a matter that should be left up to the LAP hygienist, but is the responsibility of the whole community. I would the MDA/MDHA to continue to work together on helping the LAP hygienist get into these underserved areas by creating a network of dentists that can aid in treatment of the unmet dental needs the LAP hygienist may discover. I would like to see the schools and the nurses also step up to help minimize the paperwork burden these LAP hygienists face. The plan moving forward must involve the teamwork of the LAP hygienist, a network of dentists, and the schools to improve the dental health for those less fortunate.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, May 6, 2024 1:32 PM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 6th May 2024 13:32

**First Name:**

Lisa

**Last Name:**

Blevins

**Email Address:**

lblevins@rosebudcountymt.com

**Subject:**

Funding for Limited Access Permit Dental Hygienists to work in schools with low-income students .

**Comment:**

I implore the committee to lend its support to the inclusion of Registered Dental Hygienists in providing essential dental hygiene services to students within schools. This can be seamlessly integrated into their educational routines with minimal disruption. For instance, examinations or cleanings could be scheduled before or after school, or during recess periods. Facilitating RDHs to aid children in schools exemplifies a prudent and economically viable strategy for preventive care. Our children are our future. An investment in their health (dental or otherwise) is the human thing to do.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 9:03 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 6th March 2024 09:02

**First Name:**  
harvey

**Last Name:**  
Nyberg

**Email Address:**  
henmt1@comcast.net

**Subject:**  
General

**Comment:**

It seems that this committee, like so much of government these days, has reached a crossroads. We often hear the simpleton statement that "elections have consequences" as an excuse for autocratic leadership on one side or the other. But consider a district in which 50.1% of the voters elect their representative. Do you truly believe that means that the other 49.9% do not deserve representation. If so, you live in the wrong country - you should live in a dictatorship like Russia. Representative government relies on "statesmen and women" who represent the interests of all of the people in their district. I challenge you to represent the broad population of Montana not just the narrow sliver that may have elected you. After all, we are all in this together.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 8:41 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 7th May 2024 08:40

**First Name:**  
Christine

**Last Name:**  
Armstrong

**Email Address:**  
healthysmilehappyheart@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

Access to care is a problem for some families, and Registered Dental Hygienists are the perfect providers to help bridge the gap for at-risk students. I've discussed this with many teachers and not one of them has said that it would place a burden on their lesson time, as a legislator mentioned in her Facebook post. The staff I spoke with expressed gratitude and I heard a lot of stories about kids who just need the resources to be available to them. Schools work so closely with at-need families and they are rooting for this rule to pass. Not all families will use this resource, but for the kids who truly need us, we are going to make a difference for them. As far as collaborative agreements, I believe this is an entirely different discussion and has nothing to do with the rule change passing. This rule is about expanding access to care and adding a facility type.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)



**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 7:50 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 7th May 2024 07:49

**First Name:**  
Ellie

**Last Name:**  
Bicha

**Email Address:**  
ebichardh@gmail.com

**Subject:**  
MAR 24-138-84

**Comment:**

I am in favor of allowing this rule to pass. Please consider the great economic effect on our children and state of LAP hygienists we're allowed to perform PREVENTIVE SERVICES to children in schools! It would save the State of MT thousand and thousands of Medicaid dollars being used to preform avoidable and unnecessary dental surgeries on so many children! Please vote yes to pass this rule

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)

**Sullivan, Erin**

---

**From:** donotreply@legmt.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 7:52 AM  
**To:** LEG Cmte-EAICcomment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for EAIC

## Public Comments for Economic Affairs Interim Committee

**Date:** 7th May 2024 07:51

**First Name:**  
Callie

**Last Name:**  
Rech

**Email Address:**  
crech@sgcountymt.gov

**Subject:**  
Let LAPS help kids in school

**Comment:**  
I implore the committee to lend its support to the inclusion of Registered Dental Hygienists in providing essential dental hygiene services to students within schools. This can be seamlessly integrated into their educational routines with minimal disruption. For instance, examinations or cleanings could be scheduled before or after school, or during recess periods. Reflecting on my tenure as both a teacher and administrator, I vividly recall instances where children missed pivotal learning opportunities due to dental ailments like decay and pain. Facilitating RDHs to aid children in schools exemplifies a prudent and economically viable strategy for preventive care.

Sent via [leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/](https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/public-comments-eaic/)