

# HB 3880: An Act relative to dental hygienist reciprocal licensure

Sponsored by Rep. Tackey Chan | Currently before the Joint Committee on Financial Services (as of August 1, 2023)



## About the Bill

This bill would establish a process for allowing licensed **dentists** who have been practicing in another jurisdiction, including internationally, for **at least five years** to practice and serve patients as **dental hygienists** in the **Commonwealth without additional examination**.

## Why We're Supporting

Improving access to dental care is essential for promoting overall public health. Allowing experienced dentists to practice as dental hygienists increases the number of oral healthcare providers, ensuring that more patients can access preventive and essential dental services;

This proposed legislation aims to help address the hygienist staffing shortage, which is causing delays in oral health care appointments for thousands of Massachusetts residents. According to the American Dental Association (ADA), 4 out of 10 dental practices have unfilled hygienist or assistant positions, and people licensed as dentists in other countries with 5+ years of experience are excellent candidates to become highly competent, much-needed dental hygienists;

Proactive strategies are necessary for addressing workforce challenges, and the process outlined in this bill would break down barriers to connect with talent, protect standards of care, promote greater access to oral health care by increasing the supply of professionals to see patients, and provide an additional pathway for people wanting to work in dentistry (which we know is a rewarding, impactful, and meaningful career);

Foreign-trained dentists and dentists who have practiced in another jurisdiction and have practiced for at least five years possess a wealth of knowledge and clinical experience. By allowing them to serve as dental hygienists, the bill taps into this existing expertise, ensuring that patients receive high-quality care from professionals with a deep understanding of dental practices and patient needs.