

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5303 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT ALLOWING DENTAL HYGIENISTS TO PROVIDE DENTAL HYGIENE
Title: SERVICES IN PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

Vote Date: 3/5/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/24/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill allows licensed dental hygienists to practice in private residences. Current law states that they generally may only practice under the supervision of a licensed dentist however if they have been practicing for at least two years they may practice in a public health facility.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

None applicable.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Ms. Shantelle Varrs, Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Social Services: They support this legislation. It adds private home residence within the definition of the Public Health Registered Dental Hygienist into their scope of practice.

Ms. Mairead Painter, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Dept. of Aging and Disability Services: They are in **support** of this proposal. Poor oral health is directly linked to serious health complications. Preventive dental hygiene services play a critical role in avoiding more complex and costly interventions. This bill advances health equity and strengthens community-based care access.

Mr. Michael Werner, Lead Aging Policy Analyst, Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity: They are in **support** if this bill. The bill adds a “private residence” to the places where a Public Health Registered Dental Hygienist can practice in

the community. Hygienists are still required to refer and patient with needs outside the dental hygienist scope of practice and coordinate such referral for treatment to licensed dentists.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Ms. Marlene Chickerella, Chair, Home Care Association of America: They **support** this legislation. It would expand oral health care options for people who are housebound or otherwise having difficulty getting to the dentist.

Ms. Liz Dupont-Diehl, Connecticut Citizen Action Group: They offered their comments in **support** of the bill. It would assist people who are homebound or disabled who cannot travel to the dentist office.

Ms. Marie Paulis, Legislative Chairperson, Connecticut Dental Hygienists Association: Dental hygienists work in both private and public health settings, making assessments, take x-rays, and contact the dentist or doctor when needed and they have the professional knowledge and skills to do so. Being allowed to practice in a private residence is a step forward.

Ms. Jean Schensul: She has spent much of her life doing research for improving the health of vulnerable people. Treatment at home allows dental hygienists to clean teeth, examine mouths, take x-rays and refer to dentists for follow-up care.

Ms. Lori Savage: She offered testimony in **support** of this proposal. This is a simple and commonsense change. They are already allowed to practice in institutional settings. Extending that same authority to private homes is a positive step.

Ms. Sandra Ferreira-Molina, Policy and Advocacy Director, Connecticut Oral Health Initiative: State law already authorizes dental hygienists to provide these services, without a dentist on-site, in nursing homes, group homes and schools. Expanding this to resident homes is a positive step forward.

Mr. Allen Hindin, DDS MPH:

Ms. Leslie Mantello, Dental Hygienists:

Ms. Sharon McCreven, Dental Hygienists:

Ms. Iris Ortiz Sanchez:

Ms. Ernestine Darden:

Ms. Sharon Efron:

Mr. Steve Courdier:

All testified in **support** of this legislation. All had anecdotal evidence or general comments about when the statute should include private home residences.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Dr. Joseph Manzella, Jr., Vice President, Connecticut State Dental Association:

Dr. Summer Lerch, President, Connecticut State Dental Association:

Ms. Kathlene Gerrity, Executive Director, Connecticut State Dental Association:

Dr David Fried, Past President, Connecticut State Dental Association:

They believe that this bill represents a significant scope-of-practice expansion that is not appropriately framed or vetted as such. It should be referred for a formal scope -of-practice review to fully evaluate its merits, safeguards, implementation considerations and need. The absence of a prior comprehensive dental exam, formal diagnosis, and an ongoing dentist oversight raises significant safety concerns for both the patient and the hygienist and risks fragmenting continuity of care. For these and other reasons included in their testimony they are **opposed** to the bill.

Dr. Peter Katz, DMD, Chairman, Connecticut Dental Commission:

They are **opposed** to the passage of this proposal. Adding the phrase “or private residence” to the existing statute will do nothing to ensure the quality of oral care, safety of the patient, ability to monitor sterilization and disinfection techniques, and liability protection for the patient or the hygienist.

Dr. David Fenton, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon: His comments are in **opposition** to this legislation because it poses many unnecessary risks, not only to a vulnerable population, but also to the general public, and to the hygienists themselves. At the very least this proposal should be directed to undergo a scope of practice review, and the subsequent regulatory process to prevent unintended consequences.

Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk

Date: 3/13/26

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Aheart, Clerk