

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 726
By: Deuell
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Fluoride varnish is a unique fluoride delivery system for tooth decay prevention. There is virtually no ingestion of fluoride after its use and its application is simple and quick. It is well-documented that fluoride application reduces tooth decay rates.

Each year licensed dental hygienists volunteer to provide fluoride varnish to children in underserved populations. However, hygienists are not allowed to apply fluoride varnish unless under the supervision of a dentist, making it more difficult to provide this service for these children.

As proposed, S.B. 726 permits dental hygienists to apply for a limited prescription permit for the application of fluoride varnish without the supervision of a dentist.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board of Dental Examiners in SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

The bill creates an exception that requires a dental hygienist to practice dental hygiene either in the office of a supervising dentist or in certain other locations under the supervision of a supervising dentist.

The bill provides for the issuance of a limited permit to a dental hygienist to prescribe and administer fluoride varnish. To obtain a permit, a dental hygienist must meet the educational qualifications and provide proof of competency in the administration of fluoride varnish as required by the board after consultation with the Dental Hygiene Advisory Committee. The State Board of Dental Examiners (board) is required to adopt rules that regulate the administration of fluoride varnish by a dental hygienist who holds a permit. A dental hygienist who holds a permit may prescribe and administer fluoride varnish without supervision by a dentist.

Requires the board to adopt rules not later than November 1, 2005.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.