



Columbia University College of Dental Medicine • New York University College of Dentistry • Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine
Touro College of Dental Medicine • University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine • University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

A.5279 (Aubry) / S.3939 (Young)

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to expanding the Doctors Across New York program to include dentists.

The New York State Academic Dental Centers (NYSADC) supports A.5279 (Aubry) / S.3939 (Young), which would expand eligibility for Doctors Across New York loan repayment and practice support to include dentists.

New York State's academic dental centers, comprising Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, New York University College of Dentistry, Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine, Touro College of Dental Medicine, University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine and the Eastman Institute for Oral Health at the University of Rochester, are national leaders in dental education, research and clinical care. These institutions educate and train nearly 2,800 students and residents annually, and provide vital patient care to underserved and special needs populations.

Oral health is an essential component of overall wellness, and ensuring access to dental services is essential to a robust primary care system. Regular access to quality dental care improves overall health outcomes and reduces costs to the healthcare system by helping to avoid more expensive interventions (oral or otherwise) in the future. The absence of quality dental care can result in serious complications, and can adversely impact not only a person's health, but also their economic and social well-being.

The Doctors Across New York program has proven an effective recruitment mechanism, enabling hospitals and other clinical providers to recruit physicians to practice in underserved regions throughout the state. The National Health Service Corps – a program of the federal Health Resources and Services Administration that, like Doctors Across New York, provides financial incentives to health care providers in underserved regions – includes dentists as eligible primary care providers.

Expanding Doctors Across New York eligibility to include dentists, who often serve as patients' first points of contact with the health care system, will lead not only to improved oral health, but improved overall health outcomes for New York's underserved populations.

For these reasons, NYSADC supports A.5279 (Aubry) / S.3939 (Young) and urges the Legislature and Governor to enact this bill.

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