



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.7968 (Hyndman) / S.5801 (LaValle)

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the New York State dental faculty loan forgiveness incentive program.

The New York State Academic Dental Centers (NYSADC) supports A.7968 (Hyndman) / S.5801 (LaValle), which would establish a loan forgiveness program for dentists serving on faculty at dental schools in New York State.

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.

There is an ongoing shortage of dental faculty in New York State that is negatively impacting the state's ability to train new dentists, and thereby compromising access to dental care. Such a lack of access results in diminished health outcomes, which in turn drives unnecessary costs to the State's healthcare system. A major cause of the shortage is the differential in salary between academic dentistry and private practice – which is particularly acute in light of the often-enormous debt load borne by new dentists. Average indebtedness of U.S. dental school graduates has grown to nearly \$250,000, and the salary gap between academia and private practice has widened. The average annual net income was \$174,780 for private general practitioner dentist and \$322,200 for a specialist. Compared to an average FY2014 salary from an academic dental school of \$93,667, this creates a pay gap that is difficult to bridge.

The New York State Dental Faculty Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program would be available to New York State licensed dentists who have accepted a full-time faculty or clinical adjunct faculty position at a dental school in New York State (including both pre- and post-doctoral dental programs). Successful candidates will receive up to \$40,000 in loan repayment or forgiveness for each year in which they serve as a faculty member in such a New York State dental school, with a minimum service commitment of two continuous years at the same dental school in New York State. Candidates may receive this award for up to four years for a maximum lifetime award of \$160,000 or until all New York State and federal loans have been discharged.

In concert with the loan forgiveness program, New York State's dental schools will establish academic and mentoring initiatives to provide a clear pathway for dental faculty who are loan forgiveness recipients to continue academic careers. These leadership tracks, which will be funded by the dental schools and demonstrate their commitment to the objectives of this program, will include academic guidance, mentorship opportunities and other initiatives to provide a clear pathway for loan forgiveness recipients to continue careers in academic dentistry.



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

Enactment of this legislation will provide clear incentive to dentists pursuing careers in academia at New York State's dental schools and improve the state's competitive position with respect to the recruitment and retention of dental educators.

For these reasons, NYSADC supports A.7968 (Hyndman) / S.5801 (LaValle) and urges the Legislature and Governor to enact this bill.

For more information, please contact Jo Wiederhorn, President & CEO
New York State Academic Dental Centers, 212-218-4610, jowiederhorn@amsny.org