

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. My name is Jim Schulz and I am the Director of Governmental and Public Affairs for the New Jersey Dental Association. I am here today with Dr. Mark Vitale, a general dentist from Edison, who serves as the Vice Chair of the American Dental Association's Council on Governmental Affairs. He is a past president of the NJDA and serves as Chairman of the NJ Dental Political Action Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about the NJDA's support for A.5212, sponsored by Chairman Conaway. I would like to turn it over to Dr. Vitale for comments as to why we feel this is a vital scope of practice change for dentists, and their patients, here in New Jersey.

Dr. Vitale:

- This pandemic has made clear that dentists are essential health care providers. We have long known that good oral health is essential good systemic health.
- Dental professionals are routinely called upon during emergencies to lend their skill and expertise to public health relief initiatives. In fact, the Commissioner of Health recently authorized dentists to administer SARS-CoV-2 vaccinations in NJ.
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- However, this legislation is not just about the Covid virus or the Flu. Of particular interest to me as a dentist is the following.
- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the human papillomavirus (HPV) is a contributing factor to 70% of oropharyngeal cancers in the United States. Nearly 80 million (one in four people) are infected with HPV across the country. The HPV vaccine protects against HPV-associated oral cancers. Low HPV vaccination rates have the potential to leave a generation of young girls and boys susceptible to HPV cancers later in life.
- This bill would allow dental professionals to administer vaccinations that are recommended by the United States Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention. Utilizing dental professionals to provide preventative services such as the administration of vaccines makes increasingly more sense.

- As trained healthcare practitioners, New Jersey's dental professionals are well educated and more than capable of administering a broad range of vaccines.
- I urge you to vote favorably for A.5212.
- Thank you for considering this important healthcare legislation that would allow NJ dentists to join with dentists in Illinois, Minnesota and Oregon who already have vaccination authority.