

Alan H. Kaye, DDS – Testimony

Members, I am Alan Kaye. I am here today wearing a couple of hats. I'm the current president of the California Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons. I'm also past president of the California Dental Society of Anesthesiology and am a former member of the California State Dental Board, serving as president in 2013 for 18 months. I am also an oral and maxillofacial surgeon and have been practicing for more than 40 years.

Speaking as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, I share the strong concerns my colleagues raise about how these changes are not only unnecessary, but would limit our ability to help many patients. Adding a requirement for an additional anesthesia permit holder to be present is a feel-good step **that would make it more difficult for many patients to seek the treatment that they need.** The last thing we would want is for patients to avoid or put off having a procedure because of it's an out-of-reach expense.

Ten years ago, an entire community was devastated in Prince George's County, Maryland, when 12-year-old Deamonte Driver died after complications from a tooth abscess. His mother Alyce, who worked at low-paying jobs, had searched for a dentist to treat Deamonte's toothache who would accept Medicaid, but she was unsuccessful in getting him seen in a timely manner. Ultimately, Alyce took Deamonte to a hospital emergency room, where he was given medicine for a headache, sinusitis, and a dental abscess and sent home. But his condition took a turn for the worse, and he was back at the hospital being rushed to surgery where it was discovered that bacteria from his abscessed tooth had spread to his brain. Heroic efforts were made to save him, including two operations and 8 weeks of additional care totaling about \$250,000, but it was all too late. Deamonte died — when his life could have been saved by an otherwise routine dental visit and an \$80 tooth extraction.

A similar event was just made public here two weeks ago in *The Sacramento Bee* where a 26-year old truck driver and young father of two died from complications of an untreated dental infection that spread to his heart.

Patient safety will always be our number one priority, and that commitment, along with the system of training and accountability we now have, adds up to reassurance of safe care.

There may be ways to enhance this safety record, but not by adding new staffing requirements that would severely limit access to surgical procedures that make a difference in millions of Californian's lives each year.

We appreciate your care in consideration of the facts, and are committed to collaborating with this group to ensure the delivery of safe oral health care to Californians.

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