

# Post-Bulletin

## Practitioners would improve dental care

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I write in support of Sen. Ann Lynch's ground-breaking (and teeth saving) proposal to create a midlevel dental practitioner to serve the people of this state.

I'm also responding against a recent onslaught of expensive attack ads sponsored by the Minnesota Dental Association that greatly misrepresent the senator's legislation.

These media spots attempt to plant fear in the minds of voters who should instead be writing their other elected officials in support of the Oral Health Practitioner (OHP) bill, SF1106/HF1226.

Under this bill, well-trained and certified OHPs would be allowed to administer much-needed dental services to low-income and currently underserved populations via collaborative management agreements. Oral health practitioners would be educated to competently provide examinations, diagnoses of dental disease, formulate treatment plans, and deliver treatment within their well-defined scope of practice.

Since they would be educated by qualified dental faculty and specialty dentists, such as oral surgeons, to the same high standard as dental students, it seems incomprehensible to most Minnesotans why many of our overworked dentists side with the MDA in opposing OHPs.

Your smile is too important to perpetuate a system in which affordable, easily obtainable, and quality dental care is too often based on location and ability to pay.

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