

Letterhead

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for the selection of Foothill College Dental Hygiene Program as one of the pilot programs to implement SB 850, which would allow for applied baccalaureate degrees in areas of high workforce demand at the community college level in California.

The Foothill College Dental Hygiene Program is one of the premier basic preparation dental hygiene programs in the state with a long and distinguished history of providing outstanding dental hygiene education and care. There is a great need for having community colleges confer a Bachelor of Science degree in Dental Hygiene, Applied Science given the increasingly complex health histories of recipients of dental hygiene care across the life span, the connection between oral health on general health, and the increasing need and demand for the prevention of oral disease and the promotion of health by the public. I cannot think of a better environment to pilot test an applied baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene than within the Dental Hygiene Department at Foothill College.

Please consider in your deliberations that the only dental hygiene baccalaureate degree programs available in California are at private colleges and universities. Foothill College dental hygiene students graduate with over 150 quarter units to receive the Associate of Science degree. These students take the same National Dental Hygiene Board examination and the same clinical licensing board exams as students from baccalaureate degree programs. In terms of workforce and future job opportunities, the dental hygienist may work in the fields of research, education, the corporate oral health industry, public health, administration, as well as in clinical practice. Most of these positions outside of clinical dental hygiene would require a minimum of a baccalaureate degree for entry to the field. It is vitally important that there is baccalaureate degree dental hygiene in California public education institutions, such as Foothill College. With the evolving models of healthcare, mid-level healthcare providers and the evidence of oral and systemic health relationships, the dental hygienist will be an important player in these new, emerging models. There is a need for such a program given the increasingly complex and varying needs of the public in the private and public practice of dental hygiene.

I am confident that Foothill College Dental Hygiene program is well placed to develop a baccalaureate degree program. The program is well respected throughout California. Therefore, Foothill College Dental Hygiene program is an excellent choice to develop a bachelor's degree program in a community college setting.

Thank you and best regards,

Name, title

Contact information

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