

Government Relations Report – September 2022

Shari Becker, CDA, RDA, FADAA

WE NEED YOU! That is my ask of all of you.... we need you, your insights, your participation, and your support.

I remember when I first became an ADA member in 1986. I remember my first state meeting with CDAA and hearing about our lobbyist and the legislative report most often from Dorothy Cox.

There was so much information that was over my head. I remember thinking why did she have so much to say and did anyone really understand her lengthy verbal reports about regulations, statutes, the governor, the dental board, the committee on dental auxiliaries?

Well, that was then, and this is now. May I be the first to tell you that I am still learning about all these things, the players, the politics, the timelines, the deadlines, the statutes, the regulations, the dental board and the dental assisting council. Though much has changed over the past years, there is still much that is the same.

Our profession is amid change. Change that we hope to be in the best interest of dental assisting, but also in the best interest of the entire profession. I am honored to be the chair of this committee but need your help and support as CDAA navigates through these next few years.

CDAA has been and continues to collaborate with the California Association of Dental Assisting Teachers (CADAT) and the RDAEF association forming the Alliance. The Alliance was initially created to bring our groups together to have a united front as a bill (AB2276) was brought forward by CDA to bring coronal polish and pit and fissure sealants out of the RDA category and into the DA category. The bill was defeated with the assistance of the Alliance, the Dental Hygiene Board of California's support and the support of a lobbyist that was hired to assist with the defeat of that bill.

Since that defeat, the entire scope of practice for dental assisting, including the pathways to licensure, has been opened for input and updating. Over the past few months, CDAA, CADAT, the Dental Assisting Educators Group and the RDAEF group held special meetings within each group to discuss proposed changes and updates. Thank you to those who participated in those discussions. The Alliance is now in the process of synthesizing those suggestions and will be meeting with CDA to discuss and negotiate proposed enhanced language and duties. That language will then be brought through the legislative process, which can potentially take 2 years.

Also on the horizon is the sunset review process for the Dental Board of CA scheduled for possibly 2024.

So, what does all this mean to you? Well, it means we need your support. We have secured a lobbyist to help us through these legislative negotiations with the assembly and the legislators, as well as the dental board and the governor. We will be asking for your involvement on the local and state level, possibly contacting local assembly representatives and politicians. But also asking for financial donations to help us support our efforts as we work towards preserving licensure and enhancing the career of dental assisting.

I will do my best to keep you all informed on how things are progressing, where we are in the process and what we need from you. Please visit our website @ www.cdaaweb.org for updates.

The Dental Assisting Council (DAC) and Dental Board of California will be meeting in November. You can participate live or stream in on the meetings. Check out their website at www.dbc.ca.gov for details on past and future board meetings.