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**Senate Committee on Public Health & Welfare
March 13, 2026**

Chair Gossage and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SB 522. My name is Tanya Dorf Brunner, and I am the Executive Director of Oral Health Kansas, Inc. We are the statewide consumer oral health advocacy organization dedicated to promoting the importance of lifelong oral health by shaping policy and educating the public.

Dental public health focuses on improving oral health outcomes at the population level through prevention, education, and policies that protect community health. While the goal of protecting individual freedom is important, SB 522 raises significant concerns for public health and healthcare systems, including the dental care delivery system.

First, SB 522 would prohibit both public and private entities from requiring medical interventions, including vaccines, tests, masks, or other preventive measures, as a condition of employment, participation, or access to services, including school. The bill defines "medical intervention" very broadly to include a wide range of proven public health tools used to prevent disease transmission.

In healthcare settings, including dental clinics, these tools are essential for protecting both patients and providers. Dental professionals work in extremely close proximity to patients' mouths and respiratory pathways. Infection control measures, including vaccination policies, testing protocols, and personal protective equipment, are critical components of safe care delivery.

Second, SB 522 would apply even during declared emergencies or public health crises. This provision could limit the ability of healthcare organizations and public health authorities to respond quickly to emerging infectious diseases. In dentistry, many patients are medically vulnerable, including older adults, people with disabilities, individuals with chronic disease, and people undergoing cancer treatment. Weakening infection prevention protections could increase risk for these populations.

Third, the bill could create uncertainty for healthcare providers and organizations that attempt to maintain evidence-based safety protocols. Healthcare employers, including dental clinics must follow strict infection control standards and professional guidelines designed to protect patients. Policies that prevent healthcare organizations from implementing appropriate safety measures may conflict with these professional responsibilities.

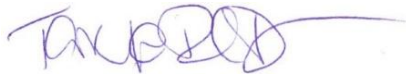
Finally, policies that undermine public health infrastructure ultimately make it harder to improve access to care. Kansas has been working to strengthen its oral health system, including strengthening Medicaid dental benefits and encouraging more providers to serve underserved populations. These strategies are working, but continued progress in access depends on maintaining safe healthcare environments where patients and providers feel protected.

Dental public health emphasizes prevention, community safety, and evidence-based policy. SB 522 could unintentionally weaken important public health protections that help ensure safe care for patients across Kansas.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose SB 522 or carefully reconsider provisions that could limit the ability of healthcare providers and public health officials to protect patient safety.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Tanya Dorf Brunner', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tanya Dorf Brunner
Executive Director
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