

ODA May Legislative Update

The 2025 Legislative Session continues to move at a rapid pace, even as bill deadlines have come and gone. Friday, May 23 marked the final policy committee deadline where all bills had to advance out of committee, or they would be considered “dead” for the session. These deadlines do not apply to joint committees, or the Finance and Revenue or Rules committees. This key inflection point means that legislators will now start to spend more time on their respective chamber floors advancing final bills for concurrence votes, if amendments were adopted, or to their final checkpoints on the Governor’s desk for her signature.

As attention shifts away from policy bills, most eyes in Salem are moving to the budget and other outstanding issues that have yet to be addressed, such as whether a major transportation package will pass this session as once expected.

With a challenging revenue forecast released earlier this month, legislators have spent significant time and effort tempering expectations about the availability of state funding for state programs and budget requests. Advocates have repeatedly been told by legislators that funding will be extraordinarily limited this year, particularly given budget cuts and ongoing uncertainty at the federal level. These budget challenges are expected to impact all stakeholders across the state from health care to education to wildfire funding and everything in between.

Amid this challenging landscape, our ODA advocacy team has been hard at work in Salem both proactively advocating for dental legislation and fighting back against harmful bills that have the potential to significantly impact our members. Below, you will read more about some of our priority bills and key legislative wins this session. While many dental-specific bills remain in limbo in non-policy committees, our advocacy team—like many other industry advocates in Salem this year—has been advised that given the quantity of bills and the looming budget challenges, many industry-specific bills likely will not advance.

Fighting Bad Bills/Amendments

One of the most important things our lobby team in Salem can do for our members in a session as challenging as this one is push back against bad bills and amendments that have the potential to harm our members. Below are just a few of the key policies that our advocates have stopped on behalf of our members in the last few weeks, some of which you can read about in more detail below:

- SB 957 (Adding dental to noncompete bans) – ODA’s lobby team stopped an amendment that needed more vetting.
- SB 951 (Corporate practice of medicine) – ODA’s lobby team led several conversations with legislators to ensure dental would not be included without further conversations.

- Dental labs – ODA’s lobbyist led a discussion with legislators and stakeholders about a bad amendment that would have removed some of the exemptions for dental. The amendment did not advance thanks to our advocacy work.
- SB 233 (Statute of Ultimate Repose) – ODA’s lobby team organized a coalition opposed to the bill and, as a result, the amended version is now extremely narrow and does not include dental. Read more about this bill below.

These are just a few examples of the significant work that goes on behind the scenes in Salem to protect our members and their patients from harmful legislation.

Additionally, the ODA lobby team also works to ensure dental has a seat at the table when there are good bills being contemplated. A recent example of this is our work on SB 125, a bill that would provide relief to the Corporate Activity Tax by exempting public payer receipts from taxable income. ODA’s lobbyist has a key seat at the negotiating table on this policy with Senator Meek and other decisionmakers.

If you have questions about a particular bill or policy priority or would like to get involved in our advocacy efforts, please do not hesitate to reach out to ODA’s Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs, Brett Hamilton, at bhamilton@oregondental.org.

ODA Bill Updates

SB 532: Dental Insurance Reform

The ODA’s insurance reform bill, [SB 532](#), received a hearing in the Senate Health Care Committee on April 1 and passed out of the committee to Ways and Means on April 15. SB 532 would increase insurance reliability and predictability for patients and dentists by aligning dental insurance laws with existing medical insurance laws, including retroactive denials, assignment of benefits, and prompt pay. While the bill received bipartisan support from legislators in the Senate Health Care Committee and is alive in Ways and Means, it did receive a fiscal—meaning that it would cost money to implement. Leadership has indicated that, given the many other priorities legislators are facing this session, this bill is unlikely to be prioritized to advance unless the fiscal can be eliminated. Our team in Salem continues to advocate for the passage of SB 532 and is working on amendments to reduce or eliminate the fiscal.

HB 2597: Dental Reimbursement Rates

[HB 2597](#) would improve the oral health of Oregonians by requiring the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) to reimburse dental providers at a minimum of 59.8% of the average rate paid by insurers in Oregon. The bill passed out of committee on April 8 and was referred to the Ways and Means Committee where it has remained since April 14. The supportive coalition is working on a Budget Note that will require OHA to add transparency into their rate setting system.

SB 957: Noncompete Ban

[SB 957](#) bans noncompetes for licensees of the Oregon Medical Board and was moved to Rules last week, a move that technically keeps it alive but does not yet advance the bill. It is important to note that this bill includes a retroactivity clause. Also, of note is the [-3 amendment](#) to this bill that would extend the noncompete ban to apply to licensees of the Oregon Board of Dentistry. The House Health Committee decided not to move the dental amendment into the bill when they moved SB 957 to Rules—noting that such a change would require more conversation with the ODA.

SB 233: Doubling the Statute of Repose (Medical Malpractice)

The Statute of Ultimate Repose (SOUR) is five years for medical malpractice in Oregon, which means no suit can be filed more than five years after the injury actually occurred. As originally drafted, [SB 233](#) proposed to double this time limit to 10 years. This bill was brought forward by Sen. Manning, at the request of a constituent who had problems with a retained non-dissolvable suture that was not identified until 7 years following his procedure. [Read more about that here.](#)

Your ODA lobby team organized a significant opposition coalition letter, which can be [viewed here.](#)

The Senate Committee later adopted a narrowing amendment that allows a person to file an action to recover damages for injuries arising from or in connection with removal of a hernia mesh that occurred on or after January 1, 2018, and before January 1, 2019. View current [bill language here](#). The intent is to narrowly expand the SOUR for the benefit of the constituent described above. The Senate then passed the bill 25-4. Last week, the House Judiciary Committee decided to advance the narrowed bill to the House Floor for final consideration, although several committee members noted concerns with one-off approaches like this.

Other Bills of Interest

SB 597: Dental Sealants

[SB 597](#), a bill co-sponsored by ODA member Rep. Javadi, directs the Oregon Health Authority to establish a grant program to provide financial support to certified dental sealant programs that promote and engage in oral health care coordination activities. The bill passed out of the Senate Health Care Committee on March 27 and has been in the Ways and Means Committee since April 1.

HB 3326: Dental Care for Seniors

[HB 3326](#), a bill sponsored by Rep. Pham and Rep. Javadi, both dentists and members of the ODA, requires the Oregon Health Authority to study barriers to accessing dental care for seniors. The bill passed unanimously out of the House Health Care Committee on April 8 and has been in Ways and Means since April 16.

SB 772: Indian Health Scholarships

SB 772 would establish the Indian Health Scholarship Program to provide free tuition and fees to qualifying Indian health profession students in exchange for the student's commitment to work at a tribal service site after graduation. The bill passed out of the Senate Health Care Committee on April 8 and has been in the Ways and Means Committee since April 16.

SB 531: Oregon Wellness Program

SB 531 would provide \$1.6M in funding for the Oregon Wellness Program, which supports the well-being of health care professionals through counseling, education and research. The bill passed out of the Senate Health Care Committee on February 27 and has been in the Ways and Means Committee since March 6. ODA supports this bill, and Dr. Taylor testified in support.

SB 702: Flavored Tobacco Ban

SB 702 would reduce the distribution, sale, attempt to sell, or offer to sell flavored tobacco products in Oregon to occurring only at OLCC-licensed locations—a significant reduction of where these products are currently available for sale. The bill passed out of the Senate Early Childhood and Behavioral Health Committee on April 8 and has been in the Finance and Revenue Committee since April 14.