

Rep. Bernier: Governor Walker signs dental hygienists bill

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Madison...Today in Madison, Governor Scott Walker signed into law Assembly Bill 146, authored by Representative Kathy Bernier (R-Lake Hallie) and Senator Sheila Harsdorf (R-River Falls).

Assembly Bill 146 expands dental hygiene services by allowing hygienists to perform their services outside the setting of a dental office. The bill specifically identifies underserved populations in the area of long-term care, skilled nursing facilities and community based residential facilities (CBRFs). Other locations hygienists could practice in include hospitals, medical clinics, nursing homes, adult day care centers, prisons, and non-profit dental programs.

“AB 146 received bi-partisan support and is a common sense measure,” said Bernier. “The bill is aimed at those individuals who may have not had even the most basic preventative dental care in many years. As we learned in public testimony, it’s critical to the overall health of an individual to receive such simple services as a teeth cleaning. Assembly Bill 146 makes it possible for more Wisconsinites to have access to these basic, but very important, services.”

Assembly Bill 146 passed the Assembly and Senate unanimously. Several leading health organizations supported the bill, including the Wisconsin Dental Association,

Wisconsin Hospital Association, Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin, American Academy of Pediatrics, Dental Hygienists of Wisconsin and others.