



**Jim Pillen**  
Governor

STATE OF NEBRASKA

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To All Members of the Nebraska Board of Dentistry:

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Dean D. Cope, DDS  
Gene R. Giles, DDS  
Lisa M. Kucera, RDH, BGS  
Terrence F. Lanphier, DDS, MBA, MAGD  
Melanie A. Steckelberg, DDS  
Prof. Michael J. O'Hara, JD, PhD  
Hannah E. Randell, RDH, PHRDH  
Takanari Miyamoto, DDS, PhD, MBA, MDS, CAGS  
Lynlee F. Mehdi

Dear Members of the Board of Dentistry:

I am writing to request the Board of Dentistry vote to approve an additional examination pathway for initial licensure in Nebraska. Professional dental care is essential to the health care of Nebraskans, and the Board of Dentistry has become an obstacle to receiving this care.

The purpose of a professional board is to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Nebraska by ensuring that licensees, certificate holders, and registrants are meeting minimum standards of proficiency and competency, as well as to control their profession in the interest of consumer protection. I understand that the Board takes this duty seriously, and we must consider that access to qualified dentists is a significant part of the Board's role.

Nebraska, like many other states, is facing a shortage of dentists. The number of practicing dentists in Nebraska has decreased significantly since 2019, and our dental residency programs are struggling to recruit applicants. Nevertheless, the Board has limited the clinical competency examination accepted for initial licensure to only one examination, the Central Regional Dental Testing Service (CRDTS) exam, which is less available, costly, and not universally accepted by all states. This unduly restrictive and exclusionary requirement makes licensure more cumbersome and often more expensive for individuals seeking to practice dentistry in Nebraska.

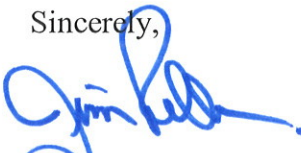
Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-1117, which sets forth the licensure requirements for dentistry in Nebraska, requires an applicant to demonstrate his or her skill in clinical dentistry by passing the practical examination administered by the Central Regional Dental Testing Service (CRDTS) *or any other regional or state practical examination that the Board of Dentistry determines to be comparable to such examination*. Section 38-1117 gives the Board of Dentistry the authority to approve an additional pathway for licensure, such as the American Board of Dental Examiners (ADEX) exam,

but currently, Nebraska is one of only two states that does not accept ADEX. In fact, the Board has denied approval of the ADEX exam for both the 2023-24 and 2024-25 testing cycles.

The American Dental Association's Comprehensive Policy on Dental Licensure urges states to accept clinical examination results from *any* clinical testing agency when determining clinical competency for initial licensure. Permitting only one exam while disallowing other, more widely accepted and available, exams limits the freedom of movement between states for dental professionals and, therefore, reduces the number of qualified dentists in the state.

Access to qualified dentistry must be expanded in Nebraska. As Governor, I urge the Board of Dentistry to vote to approve the ADEX exam for initial licensure in Nebraska to attract more qualified dental professionals to become licensed in the state.

Sincerely,



Jim Pillen, Governor  
State of Nebraska