

Maureen starts

Good Afternoon

My name is Maureen Hope and I am the Registrar of the Denturists Licensing Board. Accompanying me today is John Lilly, Vice-President of the Denturist Society. Also accompanying me today is Ryan Baxter of McInnes Cooper who is a colleague of Marjorie Hickey at that firm. Marjorie assisted us in navigating the introduction of these amendments, and she is unable to attend today. Ryan is here in case there are any questions of a legal nature.

I have noted my role as Registrar of the Denturists Licensing Board, which is the regulatory body for denturists in this province. John Lilly has an executive role with the Denturists Society, which is the membership body for denturists. Just to keep it straight, if you think of the College of Physicians and Surgeon of Nova Scotia, it is the regulatory body for physicians, while Doctors Nova Scotia is the membership body. So too for us, the Licensing Board is the regulatory body and the Society is the membership body.

While our two organizations have separate mandates, it is notable that both the regulatory body and the membership body are here today speaking as one in support of these amendments. The two organizations have worked closely together over many years to make these amendments possible.

I'm now going to ask John to say a few words about the practice of denturists in Nova Scotia and why these amendments are important.

John speaks here

Good afternoon. As Maureen mentioned my name is John Lilly and I am the Vice-President of the Denturist Society of Nova Scotia. Our president, Della Sangster is unable to be

here today. I am a denturist practising in,
Nova Scotia.

You may be interested in knowing that in Nova Scotia there are currently approximately 40 denturists who are licensed to practice. 75% of those are over 50 years of age and 25% are over sixty.

Seniors form a large percentage of the population served by denturists. As the number of seniors has increased, so too has the need for denturists' services. Despite this, our numbers have been on the decline. One of the reasons for this is that denturists in Nova Scotia are currently limited in our scope of practice. Unlike denturists in every other province in this country, except PEI, denturists in Nova Scotia are restricted from engaging in a scope of practice that involves the placing of removable dentures over implants. The ability to conduct this procedure has been in place in some provinces since the early 1990s and has been taught in accredited education programs for many years. Several denturists in Nova Scotia have the education to engage in this practice but are restricted by the current language in the *Denturists Act* from engaging in this procedure.

Many dentists have approached denturists to inquire why this expanded scope is not in place here. These dentists have seen denturists engage in this practice in other provinces and understand the value of the collaborative provision of oral health care and the role that our respective professions can play to improve overall oral health care delivery to Nova Scotians.

The amendments that are proposed in Bill 166 will enable denturists in Nova Scotia to have the same scope of practice

as our counterparts across the country. They will enable denturists to place removable dentures over implants.

The Denturists Licensing Board will ensure that those who engage in this process have the required education and experience. Together with the Denturists Society, and in consultation with the Provincial Dental Board and the Nova Scotia Dental Association, the Denturists Licensing Board has developed required Educational Standards and Standards of Practice for denturists who will engage in this scope of practice.

Those who have completed the required education will be listed on the Board's website, and their licenses will be endorsed to show they are authorized to engage in this practice.

Like all health care professionals, they will be required to practice in accordance with their standards of practice and their governing legislation.

I will finish by giving you a few concrete examples of why this legislation is needed. I am aware of a young graduate from an accredited denturism program who left the province in the past few years specifically because he was unable to engage in the practice of placing removable dentures over implants – a procedure he had been taught in his curriculum and which was being performed by denturists across the country.

I am aware of denturists who have retired in the past few years who have been unable to sell their practices as they cannot attract new graduates because of the limitation in their scope of practice.

I urge you to approve these amendments to the Denturists Act so that young graduates will see no impediments to establishing their practices here, and to assist in increasing the number of denturists who are able to serve our population.

I will now turn it back to Maureen Hope for a few closing words.

Maureen speaks again

Thank you John.

John had mentioned that with respect to our Education and Practice Standards that we had consulted both the Provincial Dental Board and the Nova Scotia Dental Association for their input.

Indeed, the Denturists Licensing Board has been working toward these amendments since 2012, and has been in consultation with both the Dental Board and Association throughout that period of time. As you might expect in a good consultation process, there has been give and take in coming to the words that are now before you in Bill 166. The amendments that are now before you have been the result of a lengthy process, in which all of our organizations have been fully engaged.

Finally, I wanted to note as well that we do have the support of the Denturist Association of Canada in advancing these amendments. This national organization has supported all provinces that have advanced similar amendments across the country.

In closing then, while these amendments are quite technical and not an easy read, they are important to denturists in this province, and even more important to the clients who will be the beneficiaries of this expanded scope of practice.

We hope the members of this Committee will support this Bill and ensure it moves to Third Reading without amendment.

Thank you for your time here today.

(There may be questions from the members of the Committee at this time. Perhaps John can take the technical questions about the procedure, and Maureen can take any other questions about the process leading to this Bill, and Ryan can be there for backup.)