



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

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**ADD DENTAL SPECIALTY: ORAL PATHOLOGY**

**House Bill 5568 as introduced**  
**First Analysis (5-30-90)**

**Sponsor: Rep. John D. Pridnia**  
**Committee: Public Health**

***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

The Public Health Code recognizes six dental specialties: prosthodontics, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, and periodontics. The American Dental Association recognizes eight dental specialties, the six recognized in the Michigan Public Health Code, plus public health dentists and oral pathologists. At the request of the Michigan Dental Association, legislation has been introduced add oral pathology to the list of dental specialties recognized in Michigan.

***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would amend the Public Health Code to add a seventh dental specialty, oral pathology, and to add a certified oral pathologist to the task force that advises the Board of Dentistry.

MCL 333.2663, 333.16608, and 333.16624

***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

Fiscal information is not available. (5-24-90)

***ARGUMENTS:***

***For:***

Currently, since the Public Health Code does not recognize oral pathology as a dental specialty, any general dentist can read dental pathology slides, offer a diagnosis, and sign the report "oral pathologist." Although most general dentists would not do this, reportedly there has been at least one case in which this has happened. The bill would prevent any future such misrepresentations and so would protect the public from unqualified practitioners holding themselves out as specialists in oral pathology.

***For:***

Of the 15 states that license or certify dental specialties, only three — Michigan, Illinois, and Kansas — do not recognize oral pathologists. Yet oral pathology is recognized by the American Dental Association as one of eight dental specialties. Although this is a small segment of the health care community (there are only eight oral pathologists in Michigan), this unique specialty — which, like the other dental specialties, requires extra training and experience — ought to be recognized in the Public Health Code.

***POSITIONS:***

The Department of Licensing and Regulation has not yet taken a position on the bill. (5-24-90)

The Michigan Dental Association supports the bill. (5-24-90)

The Council of Michigan Dental Specialty Presidents supports the bill. (5-25-90)

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