



Department
of Health

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**Dentist Loan Repayment Advisory Board Testimony
Sunset Review Committee
Lisa Griffin, Director of Government Affairs
Ohio Department of Health
December 3, 2019**

Chairman Vitale, Vice Chair Roegner, and members of the Sunset Review Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Dentist Loan Repayment Advisory Board. My name is Lisa Griffin, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at the Ohio Department of Health.

The Ohio Department of Health operates the Ohio Dentist Loan Repayment Program (ODLRP) and the Ohio Dental Hygienist Loan Repayment Program (ODHLRP) to recruit and retain general and pediatric dentists and dental hygienists in underserved areas of Ohio.

The dentists and dental hygienists who participate in this program must agree to practice in rural and urban shortage areas and to serve patients regardless of their ability to pay. The programs provide up to \$50,000 for repayment of outstanding dental and dental hygiene school loans for selected dentists and dental hygienists who commit to an initial two-year contract. A maximum of \$120,000 is available to those program participants who practice for four years under a loan repayment contract.

The Board reviews the ranking of program applicants and provides direction on the yearly funding methodology. The Ohio Dentist Loan Repayment Program (ODLRP) Advisory Board generally meets once each year. The ten members include members from the following: ODH (1), the Ohio Department of Higher Education (1), the Ohio Dental Association (4), the Ohio House of Representatives (2), and the Ohio Senate (2).

The work of the Board is supported by staff of the ODH Primary Care Office. Two staff provide support for the program including promotion of the program to potential participants and sites; technical assistance to applicants and participants; scoring and ranking of program applicants according to program rules; preparation of loan repayment contracts; monitoring of payments to lenders; drafting of the required annual report and providing additional information to Board members as requested.

The Board submits an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly describing the operations of the ODLRP and the ODHLRP during the previous calendar year.

There are no funds appropriated for the Dentist Loan Repayment Advisory Board. Board members are not compensated or reimbursed for travel.

Chairman Vitale and members of the Committee, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.