



## Montana Dental Association

P.O. Box 1154  
Helena, Montana 59624

### 2011-2012 Officers

#### *President*

Dr. Robert A. Neill  
800 W. Platinum  
Butte, MT 59701

#### *President-Elect*

Dr. Kurt S. Lindemann  
80 Four Mile Drive  
Kalispell, MT 59901

#### *Vice President*

Dr. Michael A. Veseth  
PO Box 196  
Malta, MT 59538

#### *Secretary-Treasurer*

Dr. Christopher A. Hirt  
315 N. 25th Street  
Suite 101  
Billings, MT 59101

#### *Immediate Past President*

Dr. Andrew C. Hyams  
2700 Grand Ave, Ste. F  
Billings, MT 59102

#### *Delegates at Large*

Dr. Douglas S. Hadnot  
P.O. Box 278  
Lolo, MT 59847

Dr. Roger K. Newman  
PO Box 2065  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912

#### *Executive Director*

David R. Hemion, CAE

#### **MDA**

(406) 443-2061  
Toll-free in Montana  
(800) 257-4988  
fax: (406) 443-1546  
E-mail: [mda@mt.net](mailto:mda@mt.net)  
[www.mtdental.com](http://www.mtdental.com)

January 6, 2012

Representative Tom Berry  
Chair  
Economic Affairs Interim Committee  
PO Box 157  
Roundup, MT 59072-0157

Dear Chairman Berry:

During the Economic Affairs Interim Committee's discussion on August 23 regarding the Board of Dentistry, the Board and the associations representing denturists, dental hygienists and dentists were directed to work together to come up with recommendations regarding the Board's structure and composition. I would like to provide you with this brief update.

The Montana Dental Association invited leaders of the Montana Denturists Association and the Montana Dental Hygienists' Association to discuss this matter. Those meetings were held in November and December and were productive in learning where there was agreement, as well as differences.

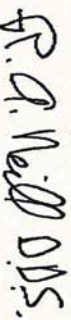
Subsequently, all three groups proposed to the Board of Dentistry that it create standing committees for denturistry and for dental hygiene, rather than creating a separate board of dental providers. These recommendations were consistent with a survey of all licensed denturists, dental hygienists and dentists conducted by the Board. Seventy percent of the 669 who responded supported leaving the Board intact with its current composition of public members and appointees representing the three licensee groups.

Each association suggested its own unique model for these committees and MDA is encouraged that on January 6 the Board adopted a motion to establish the standing committees. The motion was supported by the two public members of the Board and four of the five dentists on the Board. Although the denturist and one of the two dental hygienists opposed the motion, it is MDA's hope that all parties will earnestly support these committees to make them work to protect the safety and quality of care given to patients.

Rep. Tom Berry  
January 6, 2012  
Page 2

We urge the Interim Committee to support the Board as it moves forward to begin this strengthened committee system that will allow it to improve Board communication and rule-making.

Sincerely,

 R. A. Neill, DDS.

Dr. Robert A. Neill  
President

Cc. Members, Economic Affairs Interim Committee  
Members, Montana Board of Dentistry  
Mr. Allen Casteel, LD, President, Montana Denturists Association  
Ms. Kim Dunlap, RDH, President, Montana Dental Hygienists'  
Association  
MDA Board of Directors and Executive Committee  
Mr. David Henion, CAE, Executive Director  
Mr. Greg Van Horssen, lobbyist  
Ms. Pat Murdo, EAIC staff