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#### Groups Seek Creation of Dental Practitioner Status

WICHITA, Kan. (AP)-- Several Kansas groups are seeking a new level of dental provider they say could ease a shortage of dentists across the state.

A proposed bill was introduced in the last legislative session to create registered dental practitioners who would be somewhere between a hygienist and a dentist, but it didn't get a hearing.

Advocates like the Kansas Dental Project say the mid-level positions would improve access to dental services like nurse practitioners and physician's assistance do in the medical community.

The Wichita Eagle reports 86 of the state's 105 counties qualify as dental health professional shortage areas, including 13 counties that have no dentist at all.

The Kansas Dental Association opposes dental practitioners and says they would face the same barriers preventing some dentists from practicing in rural areas.

Associated Press