



# NEWS RELEASE

## Pankey Dentist Pushes to Pass Virginia Dental Lab Safety Act

FREDERICKSBURG, VA, September 29, 2011 – Under the stewardship of Dr. Dag Zapatero, DDS, MAGD, visiting faculty at The Pankey Institute, in coordination with the Virginia Dental Association Task Force and the National Association of Dental Laboratories, the Virginia Dental Laboratory Safety Act was passed by nearly unanimous vote in the Virginia Dental Association House of Delegates on September 18, 2011.

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In response to a presentation at The Pankey Institute on the subject of the growth of off-shore laboratories and a lack of state and federal regulations, Dr. Dag Zapatero felt compelled to act. Over the course of ten months, he presented before a number of governing organizations, was appointed to a Virginia Dental Association Task Force, and partnered with Eric Thorn of the National Association of Dental Laboratories (NADL) to co-author new legislation that would become the Virginia Dental Lab Safety Act (VDLSA).

“We are tremendously proud of Dag and his determination. Practicing comprehensive, quality dentistry is a cornerstone of The Pankey Institute’s philosophy and this is a triumph for the entire profession. He should be commended for his passion,” Ricki Braswell, CAE, President and CEO of The Pankey Institute, said.

“This is a very significant and positive development for dentistry and dental laboratory technology and puts Virginia on the leading edge of a growing national trend of state dental societies working to establish basic minimum standards for dental laboratories. This was made possible by the combination of three factors; the considerable policy acumen of The Pankey Institute lighting the spark, Dr. Zapatero’s initiative in bringing positive change, and the outstanding leadership of Task Force Chairman, Dr. Scott Miller who successfully led the proposal through the Virginia Dental Association’s Committee and House of Delegates process,” Eric Thorn, Chief Staff Executive at the National Association of Dental Laboratories, said.

The VDLSA requires registration of dental laboratories with the Virginia Board of Dentistry to protect the public health and safety by establishing clear communication channels between dental laboratories and dental manufacturers, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). In short, laboratory registration is the most cost effective way to ensure materials and point of origin disclosure while maintaining choice and allowing for technological advancements in dentistry.

“The Pankey Institute pushes its dentists to take knowledge taught at the Institute and compels them to act for the benefit of their patients and dentistry. This time it was just my turn to act. I would like to thank The Pankey Institute and the NADL for bringing this issue to my attention and

helping me in the process of seeking passage of this legislation,” said Dr. Dag Zapatero.

Members of the Virginia Dental Association Task Force included:

- Dr. Scott R. Miller (Chair)
- Ms. Karen Crace, CDT
- Dr. Craig B. Dietrich
- Dr. Michael J. Link
- Dr. Michael Morgan
- Dr. Dag Zapatero

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**About The Pankey Institute**

Founded in 1970, The Pankey Institute is a nonprofit educational organization in Key Biscayne, Florida, dedicated to helping dental professionals master advanced technical skills, improve behavioral skills, and nurture a positive philosophy towards life and practice. It was the first institute of its kind and remains among the most prestigious in the world, attracting dentists from more than 40 nations. Over 21,000 dentists, dental laboratory technicians, and specialists have attended its courses and now serve millions of patients worldwide.

[www.pankey.org](http://www.pankey.org)

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