

expected. If the Smile Direct product was merely “not as good” as Invisalign, many dentists might dismiss the product as a cheap and fairly harmless option, not a threatening entity to dentistry as a whole. Traditional orthodontic techniques, as all forms of dentistry, are hardly immune to potentially poor outcomes.

At issue is something much greater. The founders of Smile Direct now possess a company with a market cap of over a billion dollars, and they did it by challenging a respected profession and institution. They did it when there wasn't a need or a public outcry for it; not everyone deserves straight teeth, not in a country where everyone isn't even guaranteed healthcare. They did it by eluding the licensing laws as they essentially perform orthodontic treatment without having a dental license.

They did it by claiming that they have a dentist that is supervising each treatment and yet that doctor is not allowed to see the patient should a problem arise and the patient has a concern they want examined. They did it by providing treatment to patients without looking at a single radiograph or even examining the patient.

Currently, various states are challenging the SDC in the face of an aggressive and litigious SDC legal department that confronts

not only associations but their individual members. They also threaten to sue dentists who post YouTube videos that disparage the product. It will be interesting to see if organized dentistry can have success in combating a company that seeks to make their own members obsolete. Or will this be another example of an entity, be it corporate or political, using powerful momentum, deep pockets, and an aggressive legal counsel to steamroll over accepted and respected norms? ■

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## The Editorial Board of the BCDS salutes former President Paul Hertz

**PAUL THIS PAST YEAR COMPLETED HIS 15TH** consecutive year as a BCDS Council Representative. He initially sat on The Council on Dental Practice, taking over the position vacated by his father, BCDS luminary Matthew Hertz. After an 8 year term, he served one year on The Council for Education, two on Council on Governmental Affairs, while simultaneously serving as an EDPAC representative for five years. The former BCDS President (2003-2004) has taken a well-earned leave from the State Councils. Paul still serves on the BCDS Peer Review and Executive Board and continues to practice dentistry in Riverdale.

