

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6135

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to psychologists.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions regarding licensure of psychologists.

Sponsors: Senators Talmadge, McDonald and Prentice.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Health Care, February 22, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Dellwo, Chair; L. Johnson, Vice Chair; Dyer, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Conway; Cooke; Flemming; R. Johnson; Lemmon; Lisk; Mastin; Morris; Thibaudeau and Veloria.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background: The practice of psychology is licensed by the Department of Health, and those persons who qualify by education, supervised experience and examination may represent themselves as psychologists.

Psychology includes the application of principles to problems of evaluation and behavior adjustment such as counseling, psychotherapeutic techniques, measuring and testing of personality, emotions, attitudes and skills.

The Examining Board of Psychology is required to create a disciplinary committee within the board for hearing and ruling on complaints, but the committee is no longer used and the board is the disciplinary authority.

The board is scheduled for termination under the sunset law on June 30, 1995 and for repeal on June 30, 1996.

The Secretary of Health is expressly authorized to hire administrative staff and set fees in the chapter, but this authority is duplicated elsewhere in the law.

Summary of Bill: The definition of psychology is clarified to include the observation, evaluation, interpretation and modification of human behavior by the application of psychological principles for preventing or eliminating maladaptive behavior and promoting mental and behavioral health. Its services may include psychological testing, diagnosis and treatment, counseling, psychotherapeutic techniques and health promotion.

The board's authority to establish a disciplinary committee is repealed.

The sunset dates for the termination and repeal of the board are extended nine years to June 30, 2004, and June 30, 2005, respectively.

Redundant reference to the authority of the Secretary of Health to hire investigative and administrative staff and to establish fees for witnesses is repealed.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The sunset expiration dates of the Board of Psychology must be changed to permit it to continue operating. Housekeeping changes reflect current practice and update the practice law.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Gail McGaffick and Lucy Homans, Washington State Psychological Association (pro); Dee Spice, Department of Health (pro); and Dolph Printz, Examining Board of Psychology (pro).