

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2920

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 20, 1998

Title: An act relating to counselors.

Brief Description: Clarifying continuing education requirements for counselors.

Sponsors: Representatives Skinner, Cody, Dyer and Wood.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/20/98 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton, Fairley, Franklin, Strannigan and Wojahn.

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: Currently social workers, mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists are certified for practice by the Department of Social and Health Services under the Omnibus Credentialing Act for counselors. The Secretary of Health is authorized, but not required, to establish continuing competence requirements for these professions.

Summary of Bill: The Secretary of Health is required to establish continuing competence requirements for certified counselors by rule. There must be at least 36 hours of continuing education during the two-year reporting period preceding the renewal of certification, including subjects in professional ethics and law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Continuing education is important to protect professional status. Continuing education improves competence by keeping counselors aware of current trends.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Lonnie Johns-Brown, NASW; Ann Simons, MFTIS; Ken Ackerman, Washington Association for Marriage and Family Therapy; Laura Groshong, Clinical Society.