

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6658

As Passed Senate, February 10, 2006

Title: An act relating to experience requirements for licensed mental health counselors.

Brief Description: Revising experience requirements for licensed mental health counselors.

Sponsors: Senators Thibaudeau and Deccio.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/23/06, 1/26/06 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/10/06, 41-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Thibaudeau, Vice Chair; Deccio, Ranking Minority Member; Benson, Brandland, Franklin, Johnson, Kastama, Kline, Parlette and Poulsen.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: The Department of Health is responsible for licensing of mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, and social workers. Under the licensed social work classifications are licensed advanced social worker and licensed independent clinical social worker. The other licensed categories are: licensed mental health counselor and licensed marriage and family therapist. All of these categories include education, examination, and supervised experience requirements. Under the experience requirements for the social worker, and marriage and family therapists categories, a set minimum number of hours are required to fulfill the experience requirements under the supervision of a specifically qualified professional or "an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner." Mental health counselors also have a specific supervised experience requirement, however, no allowance is made for mental health counselors to gain supervised experience through supervision by "an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner."

Summary of Bill: Licensed mental health counselors must complete a minimum of thirty-six months full-time counseling or three thousand hours of postgraduate mental health counseling under the supervision of a qualified licensed mental health counselor or an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill will correct a technical oversight.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Melanie Stewart, Licensed Mental Health Counselors.