

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6227

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, January 20, 2010

Title: An act relating to permitting regularly enrolled students in a prescribed course of opticianry to practice under supervision without registering as an apprentice with the department of health.

Brief Description: Concerning the practice of opticianry.

Sponsors: Senators Becker, Marr, Parlette and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/18/10, 1/20/10 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Marr and Parlette.

Staff: Edith Rice (786-7444)

Background: Dispensing opticians prepare and dispense lenses and eyeglasses based on written prescriptions from physicians or optometrists. Opticians are permitted to have no more than two apprentices in training under their direct supervision. Supervising opticians are responsible for the acts of the apprentices they oversee. In order to obtain a license in Washington, optician applicants must pass an exam, pay a fee, be 18 years of age, have a high school degree, be of good moral character, and either have had at least three years of apprenticeship training or have completed opticianry coursework in an approved college or university. Dispensing opticians who have been engaged in practice outside of Washington for five years may also be examined. If they hold a credential in another state, they may be credentialed to practice without examination if the Secretary of the Department of Health determines that the other state's credentialing standards are substantially equivalent to Washington's state standards.

Summary of Bill: Opticianry students in an approved college or university opticianry course are permitted to practice under the supervision of a licensed dispensing optician, optometrist or ophthalmologist, as long as the students are clearly identified as students.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Stakeholders are in agreement with this bill. Students need a clear pathway to complete their education. They are not apprentices.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Lisa Thatcher, Optician Association of Washington; Lynn Coffman, Seattle Central Community College Opticianry Program.