

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2034

As of March 26, 2001

Title: An act relating to authorizing optometrists to use and prescribe approved drugs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes without limitation upon the methods of delivery in the practice of optometry.

Brief Description: Authorizing optometrists to use and prescribe approved drugs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes without limitation upon the methods of delivery in the practice of optometry.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Campbell, Hankins, O'Brien, Kagi, Reardon, Lambert, Boldt, Schoesler, Linville, Van Luven, Morris, Mastin, Murray, Santos, Talcott, Grant, Morell, Lisk, Dickerson, Carrell, Quall, Delvin, Miloscia, Conway, Buck, Kenney, Esser, Mulliken, G. Chandler, Bush, Ruderman, Benson, Haigh, Rockefeller, McDermott, Tokuda, Lovick, B. Chandler, Veloria, Dunn, Casada, Mielke, Pearson, Roach, Cooper, Simpson, Jackley, Ogden, Kessler, Anderson, DeBolt, Crouse, Pennington, Mitchell, Cairnes, D. Schmidt, Ericksen, Barlean, Pflug, Ahern, Cox, Hatfield, Doumit, Dunshee, Eickmeyer, Keiser, Poulsen, Gombosky, Romero, Fisher, Kirby and Hurst).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Joan Mell (786-7447)

Background: The practice of optometry is licensed by the Department of Health and involves the examination of the human eye, the examination and ascertaining of any defects of the human vision system, and the analysis of the process of vision. The Board of Optometry examines applicants for licensing and acts as the disciplinary authority, and otherwise governs the practice of optometry.

The scope of practice of optometry includes the use of topically applied drugs for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes. Optometrists certified by the board for using drugs for diagnostic purposes must have a minimum of 60 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in general and ocular pharmacology as applied to optometry. Optometrists administering topically applied drugs for therapeutic purposes must have an additional 75 hours of didactic and clinical instruction. The board must establish a schedule of drugs limited to the practice of optometry for optometric practice.

Summary of Bill: An optometrist certified by the Board of Optometry may use prescription drugs and controlled substances for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.

An optometrist using drugs for diagnostic purposes must have a minimum of 60 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in general and ocular pharmacology as applied to optometry, and be certified by the board.

An optometrist using or prescribing drugs including Schedule III through V controlled substances administered orally must complete an additional 24 hours of didactic and clinical instruction, and be certified by the board.

The board must establish a list of Schedule III through V controlled substances for optometry, with the approval of the Board of Pharmacy. The board must establish, by rule, specific guidelines for the prescription and administration of drugs with the approval of the Board of Pharmacy. The use of drugs in optometry must be specifically limited to those related to the practice of optometry, and the use of Schedule III through V controlled substances is restricted to no more than seven days for a single condition.

Nothing in the law is construed to authorize injectable drugs except epinephrine for treatment of anaphylactic shock; retinal surgery, and laser surgery; or use of Schedules I and II controlled substances.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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