

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1689

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, March 23, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to dental health services.

**Brief Description:** Concerning dental health services.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, Moeller, Appleton, Morrell, Clibborn, Green, Kenney, Murray, Schual-Berke and Chase).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/08/05, 97-0.

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 3/21/05, 3/23/05 [DP].

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### 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:** Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

**Background:** Applicants for a license to practice dentistry in Washington must present evidence of graduation from a dental school approved by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission and pass an approved examination. The examination consists of both written and practical components. The practical component is met through the Western Regional Examining Board's clinical examination which must be completed within five years of applying for a license.

**Summary of Bill:** An applicant for a license to practice dentistry may replace the practical examination requirement for obtaining a license by satisfactorily completing a postdoctoral residency program in a community health clinic that serves predominantly low-income patients or is located in a dental care health professional shortage area in Washington. The residency must last for at least one year and must be approved by the Commission. The Commission, with the recommendations of the School of Dentistry of the University of Washington, must establish criteria for the sponsoring clinics to use when sponsoring residents, including guidelines for supervising and evaluating residents.

The act becomes null and void if not funded in the budget.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

**Testimony For:** This bill would improve access to dental care. There are three times as many individuals in Washington who lack dental insurance as those who lack health care insurance; this residency concept could help to alleviate the problems caused by lack of dental insurance. Additionally, it would be very beneficial for new graduates to treat the poor, as it would increase awareness and social responsibility and also provide the dentists with different types of patients and health issues than they usually are exposed to through schooling. Each resident could handle up to 2,200 appointments a year. The residency program could also assist in recruiting dentists to rural areas.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Representative Cody, prime sponsor; Linda Hull, Dr. Rhonda Savage, Washington State Dental Association; Mark Secord, Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers.