

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6820

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, February 1, 2006

**Title:** An act relating to application requirements for licensing physicians.

**Brief Description:** Concerning application requirements for licensing physicians.

**Sponsors:** Senators Keiser, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Parlette, Franklin, Benson and Kline.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/30/06, 2/1/06 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6820 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**Staff:** Edith Rice (786-7444)

**Background:** Under RCW 18.71, no person may practice medicine without having a license to do so. Applicants must file an application for licensure with the Medical Quality Assurance Commission. Current licensing requirements include the following: (1) proof that the applicant has graduated from a school of medicine approved by the commission, (2) proof that the applicant has completed two years of post graduate medical training in a program acceptable to the commission, (3) that the applicant is of good moral character, and (4) that the applicant is physically and mentally capable of safely carrying on the practice of medicine.

Applicants must also successfully complete an examination administered by the Medical Quality Assurance Commission. If an applicant is licensed by another state or has satisfactorily passed the examinations given by the national board of medical examiners, he or she may be granted a license without examination if he or she can show that the standards, eligibility requirements, and examinations of that state are at least equal in all respects to those of this state.

Discipline of license holders or applicants is regulated under the Uniform Disciplinary Act, RCW 18.130. Under current law, the Medical Quality Assurance Commission must prove charges of unprofessional conduct by an applicant and provide the same due process and hearing requirements that apply to those who already have a license to practice medicine.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** In addition to the licensing requirements already provided for by statute, applicants must show (1) that they have not engaged in any conduct that would constitute grounds for disciplinary action under this chapter, (2) that they have not had a license to practice medicine revoked in another jurisdiction for an act which constitutes

unprofessional conduct under this chapter, (3) that they are not currently under investigation or restriction for an act in another jurisdiction which constitutes unprofessional conduct under this chapter, and (4) that they have not given up a license in lieu of disciplinary action by a medical regulatory board in another jurisdiction for an act that constitutes unprofessional conduct under this chapter. In the event that the applicant is under investigation in another jurisdiction, the board will suspend the application process until the investigation is resolved. An applicant who has been the subject of a disciplinary action in another state can be considered for a Washington license if the applicant has fulfilled the requirement of the disciplinary action of the other state's licensing authority.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill allows applicants who have been the subject of a disciplinary action in another state to be considered for a Washington license if the applicant has fulfilled the requirement of the other state's disciplinary action.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested February 3, 2006.

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

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

**Testimony For:** We support these standards and think they should be applied to all medical professions, not just physicians. There should be some allowance for those physicians who are rehabilitated or retrained.

**Testimony Against:** These standards should not be aimed just at physicians but should be applied to all medical professions. We are also concerned about making some allowance for those physicians who are rehabilitated.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Brian Peyton, Department of Health.

CON: Carl Nelson, Washington State Medical Association.