

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1379

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the qualifications of an applicant for licensure as a hearing instrument fitter/dispenser.

Brief Description: Revising the qualifications of an applicant for licensure as a hearing instrument fitter/dispenser.

Sponsors: By Representatives Hinkle, Green, Campbell, Cody and Morrell.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/13/07, 2/15/07 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/07, 96-1.

Passed Senate: 4/11/07, 48-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Allows applicants for a hearing instrument fitter/dispenser license to satisfy the education requirements if they are licensed in another state, have been practicing in that state, have completed an advanced certification, and pass an examination.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Hinkle, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barlow, Condotta, Green, Moeller, Pedersen, Schual-Berke and Seaquist.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

A license from the Department of Health (Department) is required to practice as a hearing instrument fitter/dispenser. The practice includes duties related to selecting hearing instrument systems, taking impressions for ear molds, and using nondiagnostic procedures and

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equipment to determine the appropriate fit of an instrument. Applicants for a license to become a hearing instrument fitter/dispenser must: (1) complete a minimum two-year education program; (2) not have committed unprofessional conduct; and (3) either complete an examination or hold a license in another jurisdiction with substantially equivalent standards to Washington's.

Summary of Engrossed Bill:

An alternative to meeting the education requirement for obtaining a hearing instrument fitter/dispenser license is established. An applicant may use the alternative if he or she demonstrates to the Department that he or she holds a current license from another jurisdiction, has been actively practicing in that jurisdiction for at least 48 of the previous 60 months, and submits proof of completion of advanced certification from the International Hearing Society or the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences. In addition, applicants using this method of obtaining a license must pass the hearing instrument fitter/dispenser examination.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will allow well-qualified individuals who are licensed in other states and have passed advanced certification courses to sit for the Washington examination.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Richard Giles and Lisa Thatcher, Washington Hearing Society.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.