

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2881

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 27, 2008

Title: An act relating to the practice of dentistry.

Brief Description: Concerning the practice of dentistry.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Hinkle, Kenney and Cody).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/08, 94-3.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/25/08, 2/27/08 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Marr and Parlette.

Staff: Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

Background: Applicants for a license to practice dentistry may obtain a license without fulfilling the examination requirement if they: (1) hold a license in another state where they are actively practicing; and (2) graduated from a dental school that has been approved by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (Commission). The Commission has established rules to adopt the American Dental Association's Commission on Accreditation (ADACA) standards for the approval of dental schools and has approved all dental schools accredited by the ADACA as of 1993. The Commission's rules also require those applicants who graduated from a dental school that is not accredited by the ADACA, but is either approved by the Commission or listed by the World Health Organization, to complete at least two additional pre-doctoral or post-doctoral years of dental education.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments): An applicant for a license to practice dentistry in Washington, who has not graduated from a dental school approved by the Commission, may obtain a license without meeting the examination requirement if that person has practiced dentistry in another state for at least four years, completed a one-year post-doctoral residency approved by the Commission, and met all other licensing requirements. The residency may have been completed outside of Washington.

By November 15, 2009, the Commission must report to the Governor and the Legislature with recommended licensing standards for foreign-trained dentists. The recommendations must

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.

consider the balance between maintaining professional quality and having an adequate supply of dentists in Washington. The recommendations must also consider the use of standards established by accrediting organizations.

The act expires on July 1, 2010.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): The requirement for five years of experience is changed to four, and the residency requirement may have been fulfilled outside Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill: PRO: We support the current bill and believe it has adequate protections to ensure patient safety. The bill is primarily about foreign dentists that have not graduated from accredited dental schools.

CON: Although this was originally my bill, I am now opposed to the current version because it has ceased to be of value. The original intent was to help address the dental professional shortages with efforts to increase the number of dental providers and draw from foreign trained dentists that can alleviate shortages and bring needed language and cultural diversity. The current version requires five years of experience and a post-doctoral residency, and this creates a barrier. The residency requirement is redundant since all dentists have completed a residency already. No other states require both five years and a residency. We should remove the residency and replace it with one year of supervised practice. The sunset clause is a valuable addition.

Persons Testifying: PRO: David Hemion, Washington State Dental Association.

CON: Janice Palm, citizen.