

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2570

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to term limits for members of the medical quality assurance commission.

Brief Description: Concerning term limits for members of the medical quality assurance commission.

Sponsors: Representative Cody.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 1/29/14, 2/3/14 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows members of the Medical Quality Assurance Commission to serve three consecutive terms, rather than two.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Riccelli, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Harris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Clibborn, Green, Jinkins, Moeller, Morrell and Tharinger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives DeBolt, G. Hunt, Manweller, Ross and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jenna Zwang (786-7290) and Alexa Silver (786-7190).

Background:

The purpose of the Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) is to protect the public by assuring that quality health care is provided by physicians and physician assistants. The MQAC regulates the competency and quality of licensed physicians and physician assistants by establishing, monitoring, and enforcing qualifications for licensing, standards of practice, continuing competency mechanisms, and discipline. The MQAC currently regulates about

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30,000 licenses. The MQAC also has the ability to revoke a physician's or physician assistant's license and has established a system of mandatory reporting for misconduct.

The MQAC has 21 members. It is comprised of 13 licensed Washington physicians, two licensed physician assistants, and six members of the public. At least two of the public members must not be affiliated with the health care industry. The 13 licensed physicians must include a representative from each congressional district. Members must be United States citizens, residents of Washington, and, if a physician, must have been licensed to practice medicine in Washington for at least five years.

Members of the MQAC are appointed by the Governor to staggered four-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. A majority of members serves as a quorum for transacting business of the MQAC. The Governor may remove members for neglect of duty, misconduct, or malfeasance or misfeasance in office.

Summary of Bill:

Members of the Medical Quality Assurance Commission may not serve more than three consecutive full terms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill allows the Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) to be more effective in Washington. Between June 2014 and June 2016, 12 of the 21 members of the MQAC will leave because of term limits. It lets the MQAC shape the national conversation, and it blunts the loss of leadership and knowledge. The MQAC is known nationally for its leadership among state medical boards. Most commissioners take one term to learn their place and duties. Extending the number of terms they could serve will give commissioners enough time to make an impact on the national level prior to ending their tenure. The MQAC has proven itself to be proactive and effective in public safety and regulating professions. This bill is a good tool to help them maintain continuity in institutional memory. It doesn't make sense for the MQAC to lose so many people due to term limits.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Cody, prime sponsor; Richard Brantner, Medical Quality Assurance Commission; and Carl Nelson, Washington State Medical Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.