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SENATE BILL 6485

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Parlette, Darneille, and O'Ban

Read first time 01/21/16. Referred to Committee on Human Services,  
Mental Health & Housing.

1 AN ACT Relating to expediting education requirements for chemical  
2 dependency professional licensure when the candidate holds another  
3 professional license; adding a new section to chapter 18.205 RCW; and  
4 creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The adult behavioral health system task  
7 force examined workforce issues related to behavioral health in 2015  
8 and heard numerous concerns related to the shortage of chemical  
9 dependency professionals in the workforce, and the growing demand for  
10 health care professionals who are dually licensed in chemical  
11 dependency and another field. This measure is intended to increase  
12 the supply of licensed chemical dependency professionals to meet the  
13 behavioral health needs of the state.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 18.205  
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 (1) The secretary shall develop expedited education requirements  
17 for obtaining a chemical dependency professional license that apply  
18 to a person who holds a license as a marriage and family therapist,  
19 mental health counselor, advanced social worker, or independent  
20 clinical social worker under chapter 18.225 RCW or a psychologist

1 under chapter 18.83 RCW and seeks to become dually licensed as a  
2 chemical dependency professional. The expedited education  
3 requirements may not require the person to obtain college credits but  
4 must allow for the requirements to be fulfilled by attending  
5 continuing education trainings or conferences. The minimum number of  
6 educational hours required for such a candidate must be reduced to  
7 the minimum necessary to educate an already licensed professional in  
8 topics specific to substance use disorders.  
9 (2) Nothing in this section lessens the experience requirements  
10 necessary to obtain a chemical dependency professional license.

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