

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5413

As Passed House:
April 5, 2017

Title: An act relating to physician limited licenses.

Brief Description: Concerning physician limited licenses.

Sponsors: Senators Cleveland, Bailey and Kuderer; by request of Washington State Medical Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 3/14/17, 3/15/17 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/5/17, 91-6.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the Medical Quality Assurance Commission to grant full medical licenses to holders of teaching-research limited licenses.
- Removes the two year limit on fellowship limited licenses.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Graves, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Clibborn, DeBolt, Harris, Jinkins, MacEwen, Maycumber, Riccelli, Robinson, Rodne, Slatter, Stonier and Tharinger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Schmick, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

The Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) licenses and disciplines physicians. To be licensed, an applicant must:

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- graduate from an approved medical school;
- pass an examination;
- complete two years of postgraduate training;
- be of good moral character; and
- possess the ability to safely practice medicine.

The MQAC may issue limited licenses without examination to persons who meet certain qualifications, including teaching-research limited licenses and fellowship limited licenses.

Teaching-Research Limited Licenses.

An applicant who has been nominated by the University of Washington School of Medicine or by the chief executive officer of a health care facility may be issued a limited license if he or she has been invited to serve as a teaching-research member of the institution's instructional staff. The applicant must be licensed or otherwise privileged to practice medicine at his or her location of origin. The applicant may practice medicine only within the confines of the instructional program.

Fellowship Limited Licenses.

An applicant who has been nominated by the University of Washington School of Medicine or by the chief executive officer of a health care facility may be issued a limited license if he or she has been selected by the sponsoring institution to be enrolled in one of its designated departmental or divisional fellowship programs. The applicant must have graduated from a recognized medical school and be licensed or otherwise privileged to practice medicine at his or her location of origin. The applicant may practice medicine only within the confines of the fellowship. The limited license may be renewed for no more than two years.

Summary of Bill:

Teaching-Research Limited Licenses.

The holder of a teaching-research limited license is eligible for full licensure if he or she:

- has successfully completed the examination requirements specified in rules adopted by the Medical Quality Assurance Commission;
- is able to read, write, speak, understand, and be understood in English at a level acceptable for performing competent medical care in all practice settings;
- has continuously held a position of associate professor or higher at a recognized Washington medical school for at least three years;
- has no disciplinary actions taken against him or her in the previous five years; and
- has passed the certification process by the Educational Committee for Foreign Medical Graduates, if he or she attended a foreign medical school.

The dean of any accredited medical school in Washington (instead of only the University of Washington) may nominate an applicant for a teaching-research limited license.

Fellowship Limited Licenses.

The prohibition against a fellowship license being renewed for more than two years is eliminated. The dean of any accredited medical school in Washington (instead of only the University of Washington) may nominate an applicant for a fellowship limited license.

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 is a simple bill that modernizes limited physician licenses in Washington. Internationally known physicians practicing as faculty are finding it difficult to become fully licensed, which makes it harder for medical schools to recruit faculty. Additionally, physicians from outside of Washington were getting dead-ended because of the limitation on fellowship licenses. This bill will create a pathway to full licensure, provide greater access to expert care, and increase the health care workforce. The bill also updates the law to reflect the development of the Elson Floyd College of Medicine at Washington State University.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Cleveland, prime sponsor; and Micah Matthews, Washington Medical Quality Assurance Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.