

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1059

As Passed House

February 14, 1997

Title: An act relating to the merger of the health professions account and the medical disciplinary account.

Brief Description: Merging the health professions account and the medical disciplinary account.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Backlund, Cody and Mason; by request of Department of Health).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 1/28/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/14/97, 97-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Dyer, Chairman; Backlund, Vice Chairman; Skinner, Vice Chairman; Cody, Ranking Minority Member; Murray, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Conway; Parlette; Sherstad and Wood.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background: The Medical Quality Assurance Commission is responsible for examining applicants for licensure as physicians and physician assistants, and acts as the disciplinary authority for those professions. Licensing fees are paid by applicants in an amount to cover the administrative costs of the commission. In order to obtain or renew a license for practice, a physician or physician assistant must pay two separate fees. One fee is for the disciplinary activities of the commission payable into the Medical Disciplinary Account. The other fee is for the licensing activities of the commission payable into the Health Professions Account.

The separate fees and accounts funded the respective activities of the former Medical Disciplinary Board and former Board of Medical Examiners before they were consolidated into the Medical Quality Assurance Commission in 1994.

Fees from the other regulated health professions are deposited solely into the Health Professions Account and managed so that the revenue from a specific profession covers the costs of both the licensing and disciplinary activities for that profession.

Summary of Bill: The Medical Disciplinary Account is abolished and its assets are transferred to the Health Professions Account to be used to pay the administrative costs of the commission's licensing and disciplinary activities for physicians and physician assistants. The separate discipline fee paid by physicians and physician assistants is respectively abolished, and the Department of Health is authorized to increase the existing license and renewal fee to offset the revenue of the abolished discipline fee. Accordingly, there is no net increase in licensing fees for physicians and physician assistants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1997.

Testimony For: There is no further need to maintain separate accounts or fees for the discipline or licensing activities for physicians and physician assistants because of the merger of these former boards into a single commission.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Ron Weaver, Department of Health (pro).