

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1734

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 25, 1999

Title: An act relating to licensed psychologists.

Brief Description: Subjecting licensed psychologists to chapter 18.130 RCW, the uniform disciplinary act.

Sponsors: Representatives Esser and Schual-Berke; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/25/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Johnson and Winsley.

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: The practice of psychology is licensed by the Department of Health, and a psychologist must be licensed in order to refer to himself or herself as a psychologist. The Examining Board of Psychology qualifies applicants for licensure and serves as the disciplining authority for unprofessional conduct under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

The requirements of the psychologist law do not apply to persons working in the following exempt settings: a person teaching, conducting research, or consulting in a college or university; a person holding a school psychologist credential from the State Board of Education; a person employed by a local, state, or federal agency; a person working in business not engaged in the practice of psychology; a bona fide psychology student; or a person qualified in sociology as a social psychologist.

It is unclear whether a licensed psychologist is subject to the Uniform Disciplinary Act when working in an exempt setting.

Summary of Bill: A person who is licensed as a psychologist is subject to the Uniform Disciplinary Act at all times.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is a Department of Health request bill that is considered technical in nature. The bill clarifies that licensed psychologists are subject to the Uniform Disciplinary Act even when working in an exempt job that does not require a license.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Ron Weaver, Department of Health; Gail McGaffick, Washington State Psychological Association.