

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1332

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to acupuncture.

Brief Description: Regulating acupuncture licensing.

Sponsors: Representatives Locke, Ballard, Edmondson, Casada, King, Johanson, Mielke, Shin, Brough, R. Johnson, Appelwick, Morris, Lisk, Wang, Scott, Springer, Dyer, Jones, R. Meyers, Dorn, L. Johnson and Wineberry.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Health Care, January 18, 1994, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Dellwo, Chair; L. Johnson, Vice Chair; Dyer, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Backlund; Conway; Cooke; Flemming; R. Johnson; Lemmon; Lisk; Mastin; Morris; Thibaudeau; and Veloria.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background: Acupuncture. Persons who practice acupuncture must be certified to practice by the Department of Health unless otherwise authorized by law to perform such procedures.

Acupuncture is regulated under other practice laws as well. Physician assistants and osteopathic physician assistants, when certified by their respective boards, may practice acupuncture under the direct supervision of either a physician or osteopathic physician. Physicians may also practice acupuncture as their scope of practice includes medicine and surgery generally.

The acupuncture certification law defines acupuncture as a health care service based on an Oriental system of medical theory which treats organic or functional disorders by employing specified techniques, such as needles or other modalities, at specific acupuncture points or meridians on the human body. The rendering of dietary advice based on traditional Oriental medical theory is also within the scope of acupuncture certification law.

The membership of the Acupuncture Advisory Committee is composed of three acupuncturists, one physician, and one member representing the public. The secretary of the Department of Health by law is a non-voting member.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The regulatory terminology of the practice of acupuncture is changed from certification to licensure, and only persons qualifying for licensure may practice acupuncture, unless otherwise authorized by law in other practice acts.

The rendering of dietary advice is included in the scope of practice only in conjunction with the use of other acupuncture techniques. A license would not be required solely for the rendering of dietary advice per se.

The Acupuncture Advisory Committee is authorized to develop training guidelines for acupuncture performed in other professions. Other professionals authorized to practice acupuncture may follow the guidelines to determine the level of training sufficient for safe acupuncture services.

The Acupuncture Advisory Committee is expanded by the addition of a second member representing the public.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The advisory committee is authorized to develop safety guidelines for use by other professions which practice acupuncture, and those other professions may follow these guidelines. A second public member is added to the Acupuncture Advisory Committee. Other technical changes were made.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The regulatory terminology of the Acupuncture Practice Act should be clarified to reflect its status as de facto licensure. Currently, no person may practice acupuncture without being certified except other professionals licensed to do so. The Acupuncture Practice Act is, in effect, licensure.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Sherman Cox, Department of Health; Nick Federici, State Board of Health; Steve Boruchowitz, Department of Health; and Karen Boyd, Acupuncture Association of Washington.