

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5204

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 12, 1991

Brief Description: Changing licensure provisions for licensed practical nurses.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators West and Niemi; by request of Department of Health).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5204 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators West, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Niemi, and Wojahn.

Staff: Scott Plack (786-7409)

Hearing Dates: February 5, 1991; February 6, 1991

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

BACKGROUND:

Practical nurses are licensed by the state under the Licensed Practical Nurse Practice Act (Chapter 18.78 RCW) and may practice under the supervision of a physician, dentist, podiatrist or a registered nurse. The profession is regulated by the Washington State Board of Practical Nursing. The board is composed of five members appointed by the Governor. Qualifications for membership are defined in statute. The board is responsible for approving applications for licensure, administering the licensure examination, and approving educational curriculum of practical nursing training programs. The board appoints an executive secretary to assist with licensing duties. The specific requirements of the board secretary are enumerated in statute.

Applicants for licensure must be at least 18 years of age, have good moral character, be in good physical and mental health and have completed at least a tenth grade course or its equivalent. They must also complete a board approved training program and pass a competency examination.

SUMMARY:

Individuals who represent themselves as licensed practical nurses are required to submit evidence of their qualifications to the Board of Practical Nursing. The board is directed to meet at least quarterly to conduct business and shall appoint officers annually. Members on the board may serve for no more than two consecutive terms and shall serve until a successor

is appointed by the Governor. The board is directed to consult with the State Board for Community Colleges and the Superintendent of Public Instruction in formulating curriculum for approving training programs and schools. The board shall also establish criteria for minimum standards for training schools and programs. Institutions desiring to conduct a school or program for practical nurse training shall submit evidence to the board showing they can meet minimum standards and will teach the approved curriculum.

Applicants for licensure as a practical nurse shall possess a high school diploma, or its equivalent, and meet requirements established by the board and must not have violated the Uniform Disciplinary Act (Chapter 18.130 RCW). Licensees shall provide evidence at the time of licensure renewal that they have kept their knowledge and skill current as required by the board. Specific qualifications of the executive secretary of the board are removed from statute and the board and the Secretary of Health are directed to determine the minimum qualifications.

Advanced registered nurse practitioners and physician assistants may supervise licensed practical nurses.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

The bill makes technical and minor policy changes which enable the board to more efficiently operate.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Susan Boots, Board of Practical Nursing; Joan Matheson, LPN Assn.

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

A grammatical change is made.