

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1689

As Passed House:
March 8, 2005

Title: An act relating to dental health services.

Brief Description: Concerning dental health services.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, Moeller, Appleton, Morrell, Clibborn, Green, Kenney, Murray, Schual-Berke and Chase).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/18/05, 2/28/05 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/8/05, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a postdoctoral dental residency program that may replace practical examination requirements necessary for obtaining a license to practice dentistry.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Campbell, Vice Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Bailey, Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Appleton, Clibborn, Condotta, Green, Hinkle, Lantz, Moeller, Schual-Berke and Skinner.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Applicants for a license to practice dentistry in Washington must present evidence of graduation from a dental school approved by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) and pass an examination approved by the Commission. The examination consists of both written and practical components. The practical component is met through the Western Regional Examining Board's clinical examination which must be completed within five years of applying for a license.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

An applicant for a license to practice dentistry may replace the practical examination requirement for obtaining a license by satisfactorily completing a postdoctoral residency program in a community health clinic that serves predominantly low-income patients or is located in a dental care health professional shortage area in Washington. The residency must last for at least one year and must be approved by the Commission. The Commission must establish criteria for the sponsoring clinics to use when sponsoring residents, including guidelines for supervising and evaluating residents.

The act becomes null and void if not funded in the budget.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: This bill will allow recent dental school graduates to become much more skilled at their practice and will predispose them to practicing in underserved areas. This bill will result in more patients receiving preventive dental services and reduce the number of emergency room visits for dental care.

Testimony Against: The tax increase in Washington will affect those health carriers who are also licensed in other states. The tax increase will hurt the competitiveness of those health carriers that only provide dental services. This bill has the wrong source of funding.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Linda Hull and Dr. Dan Middang, Washington State Dental Association; and Dr. Martin Lieberman, Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers.

(Opposed) Rick Wickman, Premera Blue Cross; Nancee Wildermuth, Regence Blue Shield, PacifiCare, and Aetna; and Denny Eliason and Sean P. Pickard, Washington Dental Service.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.