

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2832

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to physician limited licenses.

Brief Description: Concerning physician limited licenses.

Sponsors: Representatives Tharinger and Riccelli; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/2/16, 2/3/16 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the Medical Quality Assurance Commission to grant full licenses to holders of limited teaching-research licenses.
- Removes the two-year renewal limit on limited fellowship licenses.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Riccelli, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Harris, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Clibborn, DeBolt, Jinkins, Johnson, Moeller, Robinson, Rodne, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

The Medical Quality Assurance Commission (MQAC) licenses and disciplines allopathic physicians. A physician who graduates from a medical school within the United States or Canada must meet a variety of qualifications, including:

- graduation from medical school;
- passage of an examination;
- completion of two years of post-graduate medical training;
- good moral character; and

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- the ability to safely practice medicine.

The MQAC may issue a limited license without examination to persons who meet certain qualifications. For example:

- An applicant who has been nominated by the University of Washington School of Medicine or by the chief executive officer of a health care facility may be issued a limited license if he or she has been invited to serve as a teaching-research member of the institution's instructional staff. The applicant must be licensed or otherwise privileged to practice medicine at his or her location of origin. The applicant may practice medicine only within the confines of the instructional program.
- An applicant who has been nominated by the University of Washington School of Medicine or by the chief executive officer of a health care facility may be issued a limited license if he or she has been selected by the sponsoring institution to be enrolled in one of its designated departmental or divisional fellowship programs. The applicant must have graduated from a recognized medical school and be licensed or otherwise privileged to practice medicine at his or her location of origin. The applicant may practice medicine only within the confines of the fellowship. The limited license may be renewed for no more than two years.

Summary of Bill:

The holder of a teaching-research license is eligible for full licensure if he or she:

- has successfully completed the examination requirements specified in rules adopted by the MQAC;
- is able to read, write, speak, understand, and be understood in English;
- has continuously held a position of associate professor or higher at a recognized Washington medical school for at least three years;
- has no disciplinary actions taken against him or her in the previous five years; and
- has passed the certification process by the Educational Committee for Foreign Medical Graduates, if he or she attend a foreign medical school.

The prohibition against a fellowship license being renewed for more than two years is eliminated. Teaching-research licensees and fellowship licensees may be nominated by any accredited medical school in Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There is a huge access and workforce issue in health care. This bill will help expand the health care work force. The current two-year limit on fellowship licenses creates a hardship for physicians trying to complete their training. The bill creates a path to full licensure for holders of teaching-research licenses, which will enable them to practice outside the geographic limitations of their teaching-research licenses. This change has been made in other states, which puts our state at a recruiting disadvantage. This bill will help recruit top notch individual into fellowships and teaching positions and will expand access to services in rural areas. The bill also makes a technical fix to account for the second medical school being opened in Washington.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Tharinger, prime sponsor; Micah Mathews, Washington Medical Commission; and Ian Goodhew, University of Washington Medicine.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.