

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5549

As Passed House:
March 2, 2016

Title: An act relating to the registration and disciplining of pharmacy assistants.

Brief Description: Concerning the registration and disciplining of pharmacy assistants.

Sponsors: Senators Jayapal, Angel, Keiser and Cleveland; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/24/16, 2/26/16 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/2/16, 56-41.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) to adopt rules to provide for the registration of pharmacy assistants at a fee determined by the Secretary of the Department of Health.
- Allows the Commission to take disciplinary action against the registration of a pharmacy assistant upon proof of certain actions.

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: Arielle Landstrom (786-7190).

Background:

A pharmacy assistant is a person registered by the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) to perform limited functions in a pharmacy. Pharmacy assistants may perform, under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist, duties including, but not limited to,

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typing of prescription labels, filing, refiling, bookkeeping, pricing, stocking, delivery, nonprofessional phone inquiries, and documentation of third-party reimbursements. Pharmacy assistants may also prepackage and label drugs for subsequent use in prescription dispensing operations and count, pour, and label for individual prescriptions. Pharmacy assistants are required, in rule, to be registered with the Commission. The fee for registration of pharmacy assistants is included in the fee the pharmacy pays to utilize pharmacy ancillary personnel.

The Uniform Disciplinary Act governs the issuance and denial of certificates and discipline of certificants under provisions related to pharmacy ancillary personnel. The Commission may take disciplinary action against the certificate of any pharmacy technician upon proof of certain actions.

Summary of Bill:

The Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) must adopt rules to provide for the registration of pharmacy assistants at a fee determined by the Secretary of the Department of Health.

The Uniform Disciplinary Act governs the issuance and denial of pharmacy assistant registrations and discipline of pharmacy assistants. The Commission may take disciplinary action against the registration of any pharmacy assistant upon proof of certain actions.

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 has been a significant expansion in the number of pharmacy assistants since 2001; there are now over 10,000 pharmacy assistants registered with the Department of Health. Fee of registration is not covered by the pharmacy ancillary fee. Initially the fees were being borne by other pharmacy professions; because of the increase in regulation and disciplinary action, it is important to establish a separate registration fee for pharmacy assistants. The fee will be set in rule and the estimate is that it will be \$35 for an initial registration and \$25 for annual renewal. This bill will allow other pharmacy professionals to not have to pay for the registration of pharmacy assistants.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Jayapal, prime sponsor; and Drew Bouton, Washington State Department of Health.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.