

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6404

As of January 26, 2016

Title: An act relating to dental licensure through completion of a residency program.

Brief Description: Concerning dental licensure through completion of a residency program.

Sponsors: Senators Angel, Frockt, Becker, Bailey and Mullet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health Care: 1/26/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Staff: Evan Klein (786-7483)

Background: Dentist Licensure. Dentists practicing in Washington State must be licensed by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (Commission). The Commission also regulates the practice of dentistry in Washington. To become licensed as a dentist in Washington, a person must:

- file an application;
- present evidence of graduation from a dental college or school approved by the Commission;
- submit a recent picture to the Commission; and,
- pass an examination.

Dental Examination. The dental examinations are prepared or approved by the Commission, and include a written and practical test. The Commission may accept, in lieu of all or part of the written examination, a certificate granted by a national or regional testing organization approved by the Commission.

The Commission must accept, in lieu of the practical examination, proof that an applicant has completed a postdoctoral dental residency program accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation. The residency program must also be approved by the Commission, last one to three years, and either:

- be in a community health clinic that serves predominantly low-income patients; or
- be located in a dental care health professional shortage area of the state.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The residency must include an outcome assessment evaluation, other than the western regional examining board's clinic exam, assessing the resident's competence to practice dentistry.

Dental Residencies. Washington's residency programs vary in size and location; ranging from hospital-based programs in Seattle to community health center-based programs in rural areas of the state. Residency programs typically last one year - from the beginning of July to the end of June - and are filled by recent dental school graduates. Residency training programs are also available in a variety of specialty areas, including Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, Pediatric Dentistry and the General Practice Residency (GPR).

Summary of Bill: The Commission must accept, in lieu of the practical examination, proof that an applicant has completed a general practice residency or advanced education in general dentistry residency program in Washington state, accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation.

Certain residency requirements for use, in lieu of the practical examination, are removed, including:

- that a residency be approved by the Commission;
- that the residency be in a community health clinic serving predominantly low-income patients or be located in a health professional shortage area; and
- that the residency include an outcome assessment evaluation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Department of Health and DQAC accept in lieu of a practical examination, dental residencies. This has been practically automatic, except in counties that are not considered provider shortage areas. The purpose of the bill is to expand dental residency programs. Expanding these dental residency programs helps serve more underserved people. This bill would also help expand residency programs in hospitals.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Angel, Prime Sponsor; Brad Tower, Dr. Amy Winston, Washington State Dental Association.