

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1536

C 334 L 97

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Modifying regulation of respiratory care practitioners.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Backlund, Cody and Dyer).

House Committee on Health Care
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background: Respiratory care practitioners are certified by the Department of Health for practice. The secretary of the department acts as the disciplinary authority. An ad hoc advisory committee advises the secretary on the implementation and operation of the regulatory program.

Respiratory care practitioners work under the direct order and supervision of physicians, and are employed in the treatment, management, diagnostic testing, rehabilitation, and care of patients with deficiencies and abnormalities affecting the cardiopulmonary system.

Summary: A licensure program for practicing respiratory care is established and administered by the secretary of the Department of Health, and only licensed respiratory care practitioners may practice in this state unless exempted from licensure by law.

The respiratory care scope of practice is modified to include the insertion of devices for drawing and analyzing venous blood, and the diagnostic monitoring of, and therapeutic interventions for, aiding the physician in diagnosis.

Exemptions from licensure are provided to other licensed practitioners, employees of the federal government, students and trainees in respiratory care, and registered nurses employing the title respiratory care practitioner, and for uncompensated respiratory care of a family member.

Applicants for licensure must have completed an approved school program with a two-year curriculum. The July 1, 1997, effective date is provided to permit the department to develop and establish the licensure program. The act becomes fully operational on July 1, 1998. Certified practitioners who apply for a license within

one year may be licensed without having to complete the two-year educational qualifications and passing an examination.

The secretary is authorized by rule to establish requirements for continuing education.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 1

Senate 47 0 (Senate amended)

House 91 1 (House concurred)

Effective: July 1, 1997 (Sections 5, 9 & 10)

July 1, 1998 (Sections 1-4, 6-8 & 11-15)