

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1859

As Passed House:
January 31, 2014

Title: An act relating to evaluating military training and experience toward meeting licensing requirements.

Brief Description: Evaluating military training and experience toward meeting licensing requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Morrell, Ryu and Ormsby.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Business & Financial Services: 2/20/13 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/13/13, 97-0.

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 1/31/14, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that military training and experience satisfies requirements for professional licensing if the training or experience is documented and is substantially equivalent to the requirements in state law.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS & FINANCIAL SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Kirby, Chair; Ryu, Vice Chair; Parker, Ranking Minority Member; Vick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chandler, Habib, Hawkins, Hudgins, Hurst, Kochmar, MacEwen, Santos, Stanford and O'Ban.

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092).

Background:

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 Department of Licensing (DOL) regulates a variety of businesses and professions, and the Department of Health (DOH) regulates a variety of health professions. Each regulated business and profession has a separate set of laws and separate licensing requirements. Some businesses and professions are under the authority of the DOL or the DOH, and others are under a board or commission charged with regulating the particular business or profession.

Licensing requirements for these professions vary considerably. Some of the licenses require college level coursework (or equivalent) and experience requirements. Other professions require some level of training, clinical training, or work experience to be licensed. Other professions might require an examination, a surety bond, minimum safety standards, or other requirements, but do not require that applicants have specific training or experience to be licensed.

Military training or experience satisfies training and experience requirements of certain professional licenses unless the DOL, the DOH, or other regulatory body determines that the training and experience is not substantially equivalent to the standards of the state. The designated professions are denturists, dispensing opticians, ophthalmologists, pharmacy assistants, physician assistants, osteopathic physician assistants, emergency medical technicians, radiologic technologists, nursing assistants, respiratory care practitioners, health care assistants, surgical technologists, dental assistants, expanded function dental auxiliaries, physical therapists, physical therapy assistants, architects, cosmetologists, barbers, manicurists, estheticians, engineers, land surveyors, security guards, auctioneers, embalmers and funeral directors, real estate brokers and managing brokers, landscape architects, appraisers, court reporters, private investigators, bail bond agents, on-site wastewater treatment system designers, geologists, home inspectors, body piercing and tattooing licensees, camping resort salespersons, notaries public, driver training school instructors, timeshare salespersons, and boxing, martial arts, and wrestling licensees. Some of these professions are regulated in Title 18 RCW, while others are regulated in different parts of the Code.

Title 18 RCW includes the regulation of a broad array of businesses and professions. Under Title 18 RCW:

- the DOH and the DOL directly regulate or collaborate with a board or commission to oversee health and other professions;
- the Department of Labor and Industries regulates contractors and plumbers;
- the Board of Accountancy oversees certified public accountants;
- the Department of Ecology regulates persons licensed to dig wells;
- the Department of Financial Institutions regulates escrow agents;
- the State Director of Fire Protection, an appointee of the Chief of the Washington State Patrol, oversees persons licensed or certified to perform services related to fire protection sprinkler systems; and
- county auditors register process servers.

Summary of Bill:

For all businesses and professions licensed under Title 18 RCW and certain businesses and professions licensed by the DOL outside of Title 18 RCW, military training and experience

must be recognized as satisfying any or all requirements for obtaining a professional license, certificate, registration, or permit if:

- the applicant provides documentation of completion of a military training or education program, experience working in an occupational or professional field in military service, a certificate or other acknowledgement of qualification, or any other relevant training and experience; and
- the training, experience, or other qualification is substantially equivalent to the requirements in state law.

If the board, commission, or other authority responsible for issuing the license determines that the training or experience is not substantially equivalent, it must inform the applicant in writing, identify the unmet criteria, and permit the applicant to submit additional documentation or information.

Each board, commission, or other authority must develop procedures to evaluate military training and experience and maintain a list of military training programs, certificates, awards, and work experience that it has approved in an application. The list must be submitted to the Department of Military Affairs annually on December 1.

"Military" means any branch of the United States Armed Forces, National Guard, and Armed Forces Reserves.

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) Most military careers translate into a civilian job. If a veteran stays in the same career, he or she should get the benefit of the training and education received in the military, which was paid for with taxpayer dollars. This bill would help reduce the young, male veteran unemployment rate. There will be a lot of troops coming home in the next few years, and they will need credit for their experience and military training. When legislation was passed two years ago, Washington became a leader in recognizing military training in licensing. There are some outstanding issues related to credentialing, but they are being worked on with the DOL and the DOH.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative McCoy, prime sponsor; Mark San Souci, U.S. Department of Defense State Liaison Office; and Jim Sims, Veterans Legislative Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.