

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2503
By: Zerwas
Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that Texas is currently experiencing shortages in a variety of health care professions and that physicians are not evenly distributed throughout the state. The parties assert the need to address the shortages by encouraging, among others, qualified, out-of-state doctors to obtain medical licenses to practice in a medically underserved population or in a health professional shortage area in Texas. C.S.H.B. 2503 seeks to address these issues.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Medical Board in SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2503 amends the Occupations Code to require an applicant for a license to practice medicine in Texas, in addition to passing each part of an examination administered or accepted by the Texas Medical Board within three attempts, to pass all parts of the examination collectively within 12 attempts. The bill removes the exemption of an applicant who is licensed and in good standing as a physician in another state and who meets certain other requirements from the three-attempt examination limit and instead requires such an applicant to pass each part of an examination within five attempts if the applicant, in addition to meeting other specified requirements, is specialty board certified by a specialty board that is a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties or is approved by the American Osteopathic Association and will practice medicine for at least three years in a practice serving a medically underserved population or in a health professional shortage area. The bill authorizes the Texas Medical Board by rule to establish a process to verify that a person otherwise eligible to pass each part of an examination within five attempts meets that three-year practice requirement. The bill repeals provisions relating to an exemption from examination attempt limits for an applicant who, on September 1, 2005, held a physician-in-training permit or had an application for that permit pending before the Texas Medical Board. The bill requires the number of attempts taken by a physician to pass each part of the licensing examination to be included in the physician's profile created by the Texas Medical Board.

C.S.H.B. 2503 repeals Section 155.056(c), Occupations Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2503 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Section 154.006(b), Occupations Code, is amended.

SECTION 2. Section 155.056, Occupations Code, is amended.

SECTION 3. Section 155.056(c), Occupations Code, is repealed.

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 4. Section 155.056, Occupations Code, as amended by this Act, applies only to an application for a license filed on or after the effective date of this Act. An application filed before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect immediately before that date, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.