

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2933
By: Bonnen, Dennis
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties express concern over the inability of certain military optometrists who are not licensed in Texas to lawfully provide charitable care to other patient populations in Texas. H.B. 2933 seeks to address this concern by providing for the creation of a military limited volunteer license under which certain active or retired military optometrists and therapeutic optometrists who do not hold an appropriate license issued in Texas may provide care to certain underserved patients in Texas.

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 Optometry Board in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2933 amends the Occupations Code to require the Texas Optometry Board to adopt rules relating to the issuance of a military limited volunteer license. The bill authorizes the board to issue a military limited volunteer license to practice optometry or therapeutic optometry to an applicant who is licensed and in good standing or was licensed and retired in good standing as an optometrist or therapeutic optometrist in another state, who is or was authorized as an optometrist or therapeutic optometrist to treat personnel enlisted in a branch of the U.S. armed forces or veterans, and who meets any other requirement prescribed by board rule. The bill prohibits the board from issuing the license to an applicant who holds an optometry or therapeutic optometry license or a license to prescribe, dispense, administer, supply, or sell a controlled substance that is currently under active investigation or is or was subject to a disciplinary order or action or to denial by another jurisdiction or who has been convicted of, is on deferred adjudication community supervision or deferred disposition for, or is under active investigation for the commission of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.

H.B. 2933 restricts the locations at which an optometrist or therapeutic optometrist may practice optometry or therapeutic optometry under the military limited volunteer license to a clinic that primarily treats indigent patients and prohibits the optometrist or therapeutic optometrist from directly or indirectly receiving compensation or anything of monetary value for optometric services rendered at the clinic. The bill subjects a military limited volunteer license holder to board rules, including rules regarding disciplinary action, license registration and renewal, and continuing medical education.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.