

**STORAGE NAME:** h0035s1b.brc

**DATE:** February 16, 1999

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON  
BUSINESS REGULATION AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
BILL RESEARCH & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

**BILL #:** CS/HB 35

**RELATING TO:** Orthotics, Prosthetics, and Pedorthics

**SPONSOR(S):** Committee on Health Care Licensing & Regulation and Representative Ball

**COMPANION BILL(S):** SB 248(s)

**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:**

- (1) HEALTH CARE LICENSING & REGULATION YEAS 11 NAYS 0
- (2) BUSINESS REGULATION AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS YEAS 8 NAYS 0
- (3) HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS
- (4)
- (5)

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I. SUMMARY:

CS/HB 35 provides an exception for orthotists, pedorthists, and prothetists who did not meet the licensure grandfather date of March 1, 1998. It allows anyone who qualified, but failed to apply by March 1, 1998, to apply for licensure without meeting the educational and examination requirements. The Department of Health estimates that there are 20 applicants who would benefit from the bill. The bill would take effect upon becoming a law.

The bill would have minimal fiscal impact on the state, and no fiscal impact on local government or the private sector.

II. SUBSTANTIVE RESEARCH:

A. PRESENT SITUATION:

Prior to 1997, the practices of prosthetics and orthotics were not regulated in Florida. Chapter 97-284, Laws of Florida, provided for the creation of a practice act for the regulation of these professions. A Board of Orthotists and Prosthetists was created within the Department of Health, consisting of seven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate for four-year staggered terms. The board is responsible for adopting rules relating to administration of this act and standards of practice for orthotists, prosthetists, and pedorthists, and for issuing biennial licenses to practice orthotics and prosthetics. Two members of the board must be prosthetists; one prosthetist member must hold a Bachelor of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics, and one prosthetist must be a practicing prosthetist with at least six years of experience after receiving certification from a national certifying body. Two members must be practicing orthotists; one with three years' experience after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Orthotics and Prosthetics, and the other must have at least six years' experience after certification by a national certifying body. Two members must be prosthetic or orthotic users who have never been an orthotist or prosthetist or a practitioner in any closely related profession. One member of the board must be a physician licensed to practice medicine, osteopathic medicine, chiropractic medicine, or podiatry in Florida. The board's official headquarters is in Tallahassee and the provisions of chapter 455, F.S., apply to the activities of the board.

Definitions of practice are created for each category of orthotics and prosthetics practitioner to defined activities which are performed pursuant to a licensed physician's written prescription. Prosthetists whose patients are under the care of a licensed occupational therapist or physical therapist are required to consult with the therapist if the therapist has notified the prosthetist of specific recommendations regarding the fitting, design, or fabrication of a prosthesis or treatment with a prosthesis for the patient.

For each licensure category, applicants must pay an application fee no greater than \$500 and an examination fee no greater than \$500 and take the appropriate licensure examination, including a practical examination demonstrating clinical patient management, and written examinations, to demonstrate orthotic or prosthetic problem-solving skills, and meet certain educational requirements. For example, an orthotist and a prosthetist are required to have a Bachelor of Science degree.

**An exemption from the Bachelor of Science requirement and examination is provided for those who had practiced orthotics (5 years) or prosthetics (5 years) in this state for the required period of time since July 1, 1990, and applied for licensure prior to March 1, 1998. Only if the applicant has passed a national examination, is he or she exempt from taking the state examination. The educational requirements for a pedorthist are a high school diploma or its equivalent and practice for 2 years prior to March 1, 1998.**

Prosthetists write specifications for, make, fit, and repair braces, artificial limbs, and prosthetic devices (protheses) following a prescription by a physician for patients with a total or partial absence of a limb. Orthotists provide care to patients with disabling conditions of the limbs and spine by fitting and preparing supportive devices (orthoses) under the direction of a physician.

**B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:**

The committee substitute provides an exception for applicants who did not meet the grandfather date contained in s. 468.805, Florida Statutes, as of March 1, 1998. It allows qualifying applications to be filed up to July 1, 1999. Depending upon when CS/HB 35 becomes law, this would allow a period of approximately 60 days for anyone who failed to apply by March 1, 1998, to apply for licensure without meeting the educational and examination requirements.

**C. APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES:**

1. Less Government:

a. Does the bill create, increase or reduce, either directly or indirectly:

(1) any authority to make rules or adjudicate disputes?

No.

(2) any new responsibilities, obligations or work for other governmental or private organizations or individuals?

No.

(3) any entitlement to a government service or benefit?

No.

b. If an agency or program is eliminated or reduced:

(1) what responsibilities, costs and powers are passed on to another program, agency, level of government, or private entity?

N/A

(2) what is the cost of such responsibility at the new level/agency?

N/A

(3) how is the new agency accountable to the people governed?

N/A

2. Lower Taxes:

a. Does the bill increase anyone's taxes?

No.

b. Does the bill require or authorize an increase in any fees?

No.

c. Does the bill reduce total taxes, both rates and revenues?

No.

d. Does the bill reduce total fees, both rates and revenues?

No.

e. Does the bill authorize any fee or tax increase by any local government?

No.

3. Personal Responsibility:

a. Does the bill reduce or eliminate an entitlement to government services or subsidy?

No.

b. Do the beneficiaries of the legislation directly pay any portion of the cost of implementation and operation?

Yes, those individuals subject to licensure will pay the fees.

4. Individual Freedom:

a. Does the bill increase the allowable options of individuals or private organizations/associations to conduct their own affairs?

No.

- b. Does the bill prohibit, or create new government interference with, any presently lawful activity?

No.

5. Family Empowerment:

- a. If the bill purports to provide services to families or children:

- (1) Who evaluates the family's needs?

N/A

- (2) Who makes the decisions?

N/A

- (3) Are private alternatives permitted?

N/A

- (4) Are families required to participate in a program?

N/A

- (5) Are families penalized for not participating in a program?

N/A

- b. Does the bill directly affect the legal rights and obligations between family members?

No.

- c. If the bill creates or changes a program providing services to families or children, in which of the following does the bill vest control of the program, either through direct participation or appointment authority:

- (1) parents and guardians?

N/A

(2) service providers?

N/A

(3) government employees/agencies?

N/A

**D. STATUTE(S) AFFECTED:**

Provides a temporary exception to s. 468.805, F. S.

**E. SECTION-BY-SECTION RESEARCH:**

This section need be completed only in the discretion of the Committee.

**III. FISCAL RESEARCH & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:**

**A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE AGENCIES/STATE FUNDS:**

1. Non-recurring Effects:

None. See Fiscal Comments.

2. Recurring Effects:

None. See Fiscal Comments.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None. See Fiscal Comments.

4. Total Revenues and Expenditures:

None. See Fiscal Comments.

**B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS A WHOLE:**

1. Non-recurring Effects:

None.

2. Recurring Effects:

None.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

1. Direct Private Sector Costs:

None.

2. Direct Private Sector Benefits:

None.

3. Effects on Competition, Private Enterprise and Employment Markets:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The Department of Health states that approximately 600 applications were received between February 1998 and November 1998, the bulk of which were filed by applicants under the "grandfather clause". The exact number who applied under the grandfather clause was not available. The Department knows of 10 individuals who were denied licensure under the "grandfather clause" for failure to meet the March 1, 1998, deadline. In addition, two other individuals who would have been qualified for licensure under the "grandfather clause" failed to apply for licensure by the March 1, 1998, deadline.

The Department estimates that a total of 20 additional applications would be received. They estimate additional revenue of \$7,100 would be received.

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

This bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

This bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

This bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. COMMENTS:

None.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

One amendment was adopted in the Committee on Health Care Licensing and Regulation, and the bill was made a committee substitute. The amendment clarifies that the bill only extends the application date for those individuals who missed the cut off date of March 1, 1998. This additional time can not be used to meet the experience requirements.

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE LICENSING & REGULATION:

Prepared by:

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