

SUBJECT: Licensed Perfusion Act revisions

COMMITTEE: Public Health — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — Berlanga, Hirschi, Coleman, Glaze, Janek, Maxey, McDonald

0 nays

2 absent — Delisi, Rodriguez

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, May 2 — 31-0

WITNESSES: None

BACKGROUND: A perfusionist is a member of an open-heart surgical team responsible for the selection, set-up and operation of the heart-lung machine. There are about 150 perfusionists in Texas.

In 1993 the Legislature enacted the Licensed Perfusionists Act, establishing licensure and regulation of the practice of perfusion.

DIGEST: SB 1291 would allow a licensed physician who is also a board-certified surgeon to supervise and direct a provisional licensed perfusionist when the Texas State Board of Perfusionists finds that a licensed perfusionist is not reasonably available to provide such supervision and direction. The rules adopted by the board governing such supervision and direction would not require the immediate physical presence of the supervising licensed perfusionist or physician.

SB 1291 would exempt from the Licensed Perfusionist Act perfusionists who are nonresidents of Texas if such perfusionists were licensed by their home states and were found by the board to possess qualifications substantially similar to those required of perfusionists in Texas.

SB 1291 would allow the board to have its legal counsel, instead of a representative of the attorney general, present to advise the board when a complainant or license holder is given an opportunity to be heard before the board.

SB 1291 would allow licensing without an examination of a perfusionist whose practice was consistent with applicable law by January 1, 1993, under the following conditions:

- the application is made before December 31, 1995;
- the perfusionist had been operating a cardiopulmonary bypass system since January 1, 1989, had at least five years' experience operating a cardiopulmonary bypass system or had successfully completed a perfusion education program approved by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Medical Association.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

SB 1291 would resolve certain problems that have arisen during the application of the Licensed Perfusionists Act, which was enacted two years ago. The bill would establish a mechanism for meeting circumstances in which a licensed perfusionist is not reasonably available to supervise a provisional licensee. It would authorize the practice of a perfusionist who is not a resident of Texas if the perfusionist possesses qualifications similar to those required by Texas. The bill would also extend the application deadline for licensing without examination for certain perfusionists who were practicing perfusion by January 1, 1993.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.