

- SUBJECT:** Revising exam requirements for medical license applicants
- COMMITTEE:** Public Health — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Crossover, Naishtat, Blanco, Coleman, Collier, R. Miller, Sheffield, Zedler, Zerwas
- 0 nays
- 2 absent — S. Davis, Guerra
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Chuck Girard, Hospital Corporation of America; Richard Glancey, Tenet Healthcare; Shelby Massey, Texas Association of Community Health Centers; Carrie Kroll, Texas Hospital Association; Jaime Capelo; Sharon Donahue)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Mari Robinson, Texas Medical Board)
- BACKGROUND:** Occupations Code, ch. 155 provides requirements for obtaining a license to practice medicine in Texas, including limits on the number of times applicants may attempt licensing exams.
- Occupations Code, ch. 154 governs public interest information and complaint procedures related to physicians. Sec. 154.006 requires the Texas Medical Board to create a profile of each person licensed as a physician under Occupations Code, subtitle B.
- Encouraging physicians, including those practicing in other states, to serve in medically underserved areas of Texas could help address shortages of health care professionals around the state.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2503 would change certain requirements for individuals applying for a license to practice medicine in Texas.

The bill would require applicants for a license to practice medicine to pass all parts of the required exams collectively within 12 attempts, in addition to the requirement under current law that applicants pass each part of an examination within three attempts. Applicants would have to pass each part of an examination within five attempts if they:

- were licensed and in good standing as a physician in another state;
- had been licensed for at least five years;
- did not hold a medical license in the other state that ever had restrictions, disciplinary orders, or probation;
- were specialty board certified by a specialty board that was a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties or was approved by the American Osteopathic Association; and
- would practice medicine for at least three years in a practice serving a medically underserved population or in a health professional shortage area.

The Texas Medical Board could establish by rule a process to verify that a person practiced medicine in Texas for at least three years in a practice serving a medically underserved population or in a health professional shortage area. The bill would repeal a subsection of current law regarding certain circumstances related to exam attempt limits.

The bill also would require that the Texas Medical Board's physician profiles included the number of attempts taken by the physician to pass each part of the licensing examination.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015, and would apply only to applications for a license filed on or after that date.