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Alaska State Legislature
Representative Niilo Koponen

House District 21

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Juneau, Alaska 99811
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
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SPONSOR STATEMENT

House Bill 31

"An Act relating to applicants for pharmacist licenses"

By Representative Niilo Koponen

Foreign-educated doctors, nurses, chiropractors, physical therapists, optometrists and veterinarians may practice in Alaska, provided they successfully complete Alaskan licensing examinations and fulfill all pertinent qualifications. Standard equivalency examinations insure that credentials earned outside of the United States meet American standards of academic and clinical competence.

HB 31 extends the same opportunity to pharmacists trained at non-U.S. institutions. The state would benefit from expanding the universe of trained professionals available to serve the public. Continued exclusion of these Alaskans from practice is inconsistent with treatment of other health professionals and extends no apparent advantage to other state residents.

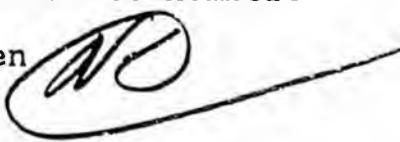
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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: House Labor and Commerce Committee Members
FROM: Representative Niilo Koponen 
DATE: April 30, 1991
RE: House Bill 31, "An Act relating to applicants for pharmacist licenses"

At the first committee hearing of the HB 31, confusion arose as to the appropriate body to recognize an Alaskan pharmacist's credentials. Here's a quick summary of the players:

- American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE): accredits all U.S. schools of pharmacy.

- National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Foundation (NABPF): examines and certifies foreign-educated pharmacists, through administration of the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Examination (FPGEE). Successful applicants receive a certificate from the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Committee (FPGEC).

- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AAPC): service organization for U.S. schools of pharmacy; publishes regular newsletter, etc.

Today, my staff spoke with Ms. Susan Meyer, Academic Affairs Director for the AAPC. She stated unequivocally that the ACPE, not the AAPC, was the appropriate body to recognize, certify or accredit U.S.-trained pharmacists, and that the NABPF/FPGEC was the appropriate body to perform the same function for foreign-educated pharmacists. She said the AAPC was mostly a fraternal, "industry"-oriented group, not one concerned with professional licensing.

Therefore, the bill should stand as written, with the ACPE listed as the accrediting body.

Finally, the addition of the word "intern" to Sec. 2, Line 1, AS 08.80.116(b) is reasonable. I would accept this change in a CS for this bill.

HB 31: An Act relating to applicants for pharmacist licenses.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Development supports passage of HB 31.

The proposed legislation will address a problem of longstanding for the Board of Pharmacy (hereinafter "board") within the Division of Occupational Licensing (hereinafter "division"). Presently, the board has no provision for licensure of pharmacy graduates educated in institutions not recognized by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE) and located outside the United States and its territories (hereinafter "foreign graduates").


The bill amends the qualifications for pharmacy registration to recognize applicants who have received their bachelor of science degree in pharmacy or an equivalent degree from outside of the United States and its territories. Currently, when foreign graduates apply for licensure, regardless of their qualifications, the board must deny licensure.

Nationally, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) Foundation has responded to this problem by developing course review procedures geared towards determining whether the bachelor of science degree in pharmacy attained by a foreign graduate is substantially equivalent to the degree and learning attained by a graduate of an ACPE accredited school in the United States.

The foreign graduate who possesses an NABP Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Committee certificate is considered equivalently educated and is, therefore, eligible for licensure (assuming compliance with other admission criteria) in any state throughout the country. HB 31 will allow foreign-trained pharmacy graduates who possess an NABP Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Committee certificate the opportunity to become licensed in Alaska.

There exists nationwide a significant shortage of pharmacists and an acute shortage in Alaska. This legislation will enable the state to admit qualified foreign graduates and, potentially improve our ability to meet our employment needs in this area.

Therefore, the department urges passage of HB 31.



Glenn A. Olds, Commissioner

Date: February 1, 1991

GAO/JS/dg18849D
020191b

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred: May 3, 1991

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: _____

The HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered:

HB 31

HOUSE BILL NO. 31

APPLICANTS FOR PHARMACIST LICENSING

"An Act relating to applicants for pharmacist licenses."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

be replaced with _____ the same title

have attached amendments(s) a new title

do pass

do not pass

no recommendations

individual recommendations

additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept) _____

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date) _____

fiscal impact _____

fiscal note(s) _____

zero fiscal note _____

zero fiscal note(s) Commerce & Ec. Dev. 2/1/91

SIGNING DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	DNP	NR	AM
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓				
<i>Cheri Davis</i>	-				
<i>[Signature]</i>	✓	<i>Mark Healy</i>		X	
<i>Betty Davis</i>	✓	<i>J. C. [Signature]</i>		X	

[Signature]
CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1991 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 31

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Commerce & Economic Dev
 Title: An Act relating to applicants for pharmacist licenses. BRU: Occupational Licensing
 Component: Administration
 Sponsor: Rep. Koponen
 Requestor: Rep. Koponen COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: None

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

HB 31 amends pharmacy education requirements for licensure to allow foreign pharmacy graduates an opportunity to become licensed. New funds are not required to implement this bill.

Prepared By: Jennifer Strickler, Administrative Officer Phone: 465-2144
 Division: Occupational Licensing Date: February 1, 1991
 Approved by Commissioner: Glenn A. Olds
 Agency: Department of Commerce & Economic Development Date: February 1, 1991

Distribution (by preparer): Legislative Finance, Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB, & Impacted Agency(ies)

PHARMACIST LICENSING FACTS

The American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE, established 1932) is the national agency for accreditation of professional degree programs in pharmacy and for approval of providers of continuing pharmaceutical education.

The ACPE presently recognizes 74 accredited professional programs in 43 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

30 other states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico allow foreign-educated pharmacists to sit for state licensing exams if they pass the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Examination administered by the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee (FPGEC).

The FPGEC certificate is awarded only to four-year graduates with Bachelor of Science degrees scoring 550 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language.

Some foreign graduates are allowed to enter accredited U.S. schools of pharmacy as advanced students. After graduation, they qualify to take state examinations.

New York and California allow some candidates to take the state examination after their credentials have been evaluated and approved by the state licensing board.

ALASKA FACTS

All pharmacists must be licensed in Alaska. Operators of pharmacy businesses must also have a license to dispense drugs and controlled substances. Applicants must be graduates of a college of pharmacy and complete at least 1,500 hours as an intern.

Application fee: \$30.00
Examination fee: \$150.00
License fee: \$180.00
Biennial renewal: \$180.00

ALASKA EMPLOYMENT

(Statistics from the Alaska Department of Labor)

Employment in 1989: 188; in 1990: 193; in 1994: 209 (predicted)

Average Annual Job Openings, 1989-1994

Due to Growth: 4; Due to Separations: 5; Total: 9

Current license holders: 489

misc. facts

HB31 Miscellaneous Notes

Alaska licenses the following professionals who were educated at non-U.S. institutions:

Physicians
Nurses
Optometrists
Chiropractors
Physical Therapists
Veterinarians

On 4/25/91, the chairman of the Board of Pharmacy told me (RGC) that he had five vacancies for pharmacists in his company (Carr's) alone.

This is not a one-constituent bill. One constituent brought to light the broader issue -- a statewide shortage of pharmacists, and an inability for Alaskans educated at non-U.S. institutions to work in Alaska.

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

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Date Referred: January 21, 1991

FURTHER REFERRALS: Health, Education & Social Services

Date of Committee Action: 4-30-91

The LABOR AND COMMERCE Committee considered:

HB 31

HOUSE BILL NO. 31

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

be replaced with _____ [] the same title

[] a new title

[] have attached amendments(s)

[] do pass

[] do not pass

no recommendations

[] individual recommendations

[] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept) _____

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date) _____

[] fiscal impact _____

[] fiscal note(s) _____

zero fiscal note Commerce & Econ. Dev. [] zero fiscal note(s) _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

FinkeLStein	Check appropriate column:	Do Not Pass	No Rec	Amend
<i>[Signature]</i>	<i>[Signature]</i> TAYLOR		X	
	<i>[Signature]</i> BRUCKMAN		-	
	<i>[Signature]</i> IVAN		✓	
	<i>[Signature]</i> PARNELL		✓	

[Signature] FinkeLStein
Chairman's Signature