

**ONE HUNDREDTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION -
2008**

COMMITTEE STATEMENT

LB972

Hearing Date: February 13, 2008

Committee On: Health and Human Services

Introducer(s): (Gay)

Title: Change optometry licensure provisions

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:

Placed on General File with Amendments

Vote Results:

7 Yes Senators Johnson, Erdman, Gay, Hansen, Howard,
Pankonin, Stuthman

0 No

0 Absent

0 Present, not voting

Proponents:

Jeff Pape

David M. Kincaid

Opponents:

Representing:

Nebraska Optometric Association

Nebraska Board of Optometry

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or change:

LB 972 relates to the practice of optometry. The bill makes technical changes required by the passage of LB 463 (2007). The bill changes licensure reciprocity provisions for optometrists. The bill requires applicants for licensure in Nebraska from another state to have been actively engaged in the practice of optometry in the other state for at least two of the three immediately preceding years. LB 463 (2007) required the applicant to have practiced for at least one of the preceding three years.

The bill also requires an applicant for licensure from another state to “provide evidence of being credentialed in another state which indicates licensure at the highest level recognized by the other state and which is approved by the [Board of Optometry].”

The bill changes continuing competency provisions for optometrists. The bill permits the Department of Health and Human Services to waive continuing competency requirements when (1) a credential holder submits proof that he or she was suffering from a serious or disabling illness or physical disability which prevented them from completing the requirements, or (2) the credential holder was initially licensed within the twenty-six months immediately preceding the licensure renewal date. LB 463 (2007) required both conditions to be met before a waiver may be granted.

The bill has an operative date of December 1, 2008.

Explanation of amendments, if any:

The committee amendment AM (1977) requires that applicants for licensure in Nebraska who are currently licensed in another jurisdiction must “provide satisfactory evidence of being credentialed in such other jurisdiction at a level with requirements that are at least as stringent as or more stringent than the requirements for the comparable credential being applied for in this state.” The amendment deletes provisions of the introduced bill that required “evidence of being credentialed in another state which indicates licensure at the highest level recognized by the other state and which is approved by the [Board of Optometry].”

Senator Joel Johnson, Chairperson