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SENATE BILL NO. 880

Offered January 11, 2017

Prefiled December 19, 2016

A BILL to amend and reenact § 54.1-2957.19 of the Code of Virginia, relating to genetic counselors; licensing; grandfather clause.

Patron—Howell

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 54.1-2957.19 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 54.1-2957.19. Genetic counseling; regulation of the practice; license required; licensure; temporary license.**

A. The Board shall adopt regulations governing the practice of genetic counseling, upon consultation with the Advisory Board on Genetic Counseling. The regulations shall (i) set forth the requirements for licensure to practice genetic counseling, (ii) provide for appropriate application and renewal fees, (iii) include requirements for licensure renewal and continuing education, (iv) be consistent with the American Board of Genetic Counseling's current job description for the profession and the standards of practice of the National Society of Genetic Counselors, and (v) allow for independent practice.

B. It shall be unlawful for a person to practice or hold himself out as practicing genetic counseling in the Commonwealth without a valid, unrevoked license issued by the Board. No unlicensed person may use in connection with his name or place of business the title "genetic counselor," "licensed genetic counselor," "gene counselor," "genetic consultant," or "genetic associate" or any words, letters, abbreviations, or insignia indicating or implying a person holds a genetic counseling license.

C. An applicant for licensure as a genetic counselor shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant (i) has earned a master's degree from a genetic counseling training program that is accredited by the Accreditation Council of Genetic Counseling and (ii) holds a current, valid certificate issued by the American Board of Genetic Counseling or American Board of Medical Genetics to practice genetic counseling.

D. The Board shall waive the requirements of a master's degree and American Board of Genetic Counseling or American Board of Medical Genetics certification for license applicants who (i) apply for licensure before ~~July 1, 2016~~ *December 31, 2017*; (ii) comply with the Board's regulations relating to the National Society of Genetic Counselors Code of Ethics; (iii) have at least 20 years of documented work experience practicing genetic counseling; (iv) submit two letters of recommendation, one from a genetic counselor and another from a physician; and (v) have completed, within the last five years, 25 hours of continuing education approved by the National Society of Genetic Counselors or the American Board of Genetic Counseling.

E. The Board may grant a temporary license to an applicant who has been granted Active Candidate Status by the American Board of Genetic Counseling and has paid the temporary license fee. Temporary licenses shall be valid for a period of up to one year. An applicant shall not be eligible for temporary license renewal upon expiration of Active Candidate Status as defined by the American Board of Genetic Counseling. A person practicing genetic counseling under a temporary license shall be supervised by a licensed genetic counselor or physician.

INTRODUCED

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