

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA



Legislative Fiscal Note

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 1357 (Third Edition)

SHORT TITLE: Amend Acupuncture Laws/Fees.

SPONSOR(S): Representatives Fisher and Gibson

FISCAL IMPACT					
	Yes (X)	No ()	No Estimate Available ()		
	<u>FY 2005-06</u>	<u>FY 2006-07</u>	<u>FY 2007-08</u>	<u>FY 2008-09</u>	<u>FY 2009-10</u>
REVENUES:					
General Fund					
Licensing board					
					* No General Fund Impact *
					\$2,000 - \$5,000
POSITIONS					
(cumulative):					
PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) & PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED: Acupuncture Licensing Board					
EFFECTIVE DATE: When law.					

BILL SUMMARY: House Bill 1357 makes the following changes to the statutes governing the Acupuncture Licensing Board:

- Authorizes the Board to hire professional advisors, including legal counsel, and set their compensation.
- Allows licensure of applicants licensed for at least 10 years in another state if the applicant has no disciplinary actions in that period and meets minimum continuing education standards.
- Adds requirements for renewal of licenses.
- Adds new language providing for an inactive license and for the renewal of suspended, expired, and lapsed licenses.
- Increases some fees related to licensure and adds new fees.

The second edition of the bill made a technical change.

The third edition of the bill modified the requirement pertaining to demonstrated experience to qualify for a license to practice acupuncture. Neither edition affected the fiscal impact.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY: The Acupuncture Licensing Board was created in 1993 and has licensed a total of 321 acupuncturists since its creation. There are currently 235 licensed acupuncturists in North Carolina and two soon-to-be accredited schools of acupuncture, one in Mars Hill and the other in Sugar Grove. The number of acupuncturists applying for licensure has increased significantly in recent years. In 2003, the Acupuncture Licensing Board received 21 new applications for licensure; in 2004, the board received 41 new applications. As of May 2005 the board has received 30 new applications.

New (First-Time) Acupuncturist Applications			
	2003	2004	2005
# of applications	21	41	30

The board currently assesses fees for applications, licensure, and other services as provided in their administrative rules, but these practices have not been set in statute. Fees are paid directly to the board and do not impact the General Fund. This legislation does not increase the major fees (for application, licensure, and renewal of licenses) from which the board derives most of its funding from the 1993 levels. The table below presents only fees that will increase pursuant to this legislation:

Schedule of Proposed Fee Increases		
	Current fee	Proposed Fee
Late license renewal	\$75.00	\$200.00
Returned check	\$25.00	\$40.00
License verification	\$25.00	\$40.00
School application	\$750.00	\$1,000.00
Continuing education provider	\$50.00	**
**The board seeks statutory authority to increase the continuing education provider fee up to \$200, but does not plan to increase the fee at this time		

Total board revenues for FY 2004 were \$50,733. Of that amount, 99.2% (\$50,313) was fee revenue. The board does not receive any state appropriations.

The increases in fee revenue anticipated by the board are small and difficult to project accurately due to the small number of licensees and biannual renewal requirements. No data was available on the number of late license renewals. The board estimates the fee changes in this bill will result in \$2,000 to \$5,000 in additional fee revenue per year, the largest variable being whether one of the two acupuncture schools is due for a renewal in a given year.

SOURCES OF DATA: Acupuncture Licensing Board

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

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DATE: May 9, 2005

Signed Copy Located in the NCGA Principal Clerk's Offices