

ANALYSIS OF HOUSE BILL 1838

Creating the impaired dentist account.

SPONSORS: Representatives Shual-Berk and Mulliken.

BACKGROUND: The Dental Quality Assurance Commission administers an Impaired Dentist Program for rehabilitation of dentists who are impaired by substance abuse. This program is intended for dentists who volunteer and are required to participate in treatment by the commission as a condition for deferring sanctions imposed by the Uniform Disciplinary Act, such as license revocation or suspension. The program includes intervention in cases of verified impairment, referring impaired dentists to treatment, monitoring progress, providing prevention and post-treatment support and contracting with treatment providers.

The Impaired Dentist Program is funded by a surcharge of \$15.00 on dental licenses which are placed in the Health Professions Account for implementing the program.

The Impaired Physician Program under contract with the Medical Quality Assurance Commission is a similar program involving not only physicians but by contract includes the participation of osteopathic physicians, podiatrists and veterinarians. The program includes treatment of impairment as a result of substance abuse, as well as mental illness or other debilitating conditions.

The dental commission does not currently contract with this impaired physician program to provide treatment services to impaired dentists.

SUMMARY: The surcharge on dental licenses for funding the Impaired Dentist Program is increased from \$15.00 to \$25.00.

The funds collected are deposited in a new Impaired Dentist Account in the custody of the State Treasurer to be used solely for the Impaired Dentist Program, and only the Secretary of Health may authorize expenditures from the account.

The Dental Quality Assurance Commission may contract with the Impaired Physician Program to provide treatment to impaired dentists which can be financed by funds in the Impaired Dentist Account.

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