

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1290

H. P. 936

House of Representatives, March 3, 1971

Referred to Committee on Health and Institutional Services. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

BERTHA W. JOHNSON, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Wight of Presque Isle.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

AN ACT Relating to Educational Programs for Optometrists.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

R. S., T. 32, § 2557, additional. Title 32 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new section 2557 to read as follows:

§ 2557. Educational programs

All optometrists now or hereafter licensed in the State of Maine are and shall be required to take annual courses in subjects related to the practice of the profession of optometry, to the end that the utilization and application of new techniques, scientific and technical advances and the achievements of research will assure comprehensive vision care to the public. The length of study shall be determined by the board, but in no event shall it exceed 20 hours in any calendar year. Attendance must be at a course or courses approved by the board and is to be certified to the board upon a form provided by the board and shall be submitted by each optometrist at the time he makes application to the board for the renewal of his license and shall accompany the annual renewal fee. The board is authorized to use up to $\frac{1}{2}$ of its annual renewal fees for the purposes of contracting with institutions of higher learning, professional organizations or qualified individuals for the providing of educational programs approved by the board. In no instance may the board require a greater number of hours of study than are available at approved courses held within the State of Maine, and the board shall be permitted to waive this requirement in cases of illness, undue hardship or in instances where applicants did not have access to such courses. If an applicant for a renewal of license fails to comply with this provision and no action has been taken by the board to waive the requirement because of the causes specified, then the board shall

not renew the license, except that in its discretion, it may renew the license conditionally, with the provision that within 6 months the applicant shall fulfill the requirements.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to give the State Board of Registration and Examination in Optometry the authority to require as a condition to the renewal of licenses for all optometrists a minimum number of hours spent in certified courses of continuing education. It is desired to leave substantial discretion in the board to determine what educational requirements shall be satisfactory and the exceptions, if any, to such requirements.