

**SUBJECT:** Requirements to practice orthotics and prosthetics

**COMMITTEE:** Public Health — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 10 ayes — Kolkhorst, Naishtat, Collier, Cortez, S. Davis, Guerra, S. King, Laubenberg, J.D. Sheffield, Zedler

0 nays

1 absent — Coleman

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, March 13 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

**WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Snapper Carr, Texas Association of Orthotists and Prothetists; Dan Finch, Texas Medical Association; Jared Howell, Baylor College of Medicine)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Olvera, Texas Board of Orthotics and Prosthetics)

**BACKGROUND:** Occupations Code, sec. 605.002, defines an orthosis as a custom-fabricated or custom-fitted medical device designed to provide for the support, alignment, prevention, or correction of a neuromuscular or musculoskeletal disease, injury, or deformity. Orthotics is the science and practice of measuring, designing, fitting, or servicing an orthosis.

The Occupations Code defines a prosthesis as a custom-fabricated or custom-fitted medical device used to replace a missing limb, appendage, or other external human body part that is not surgically implanted. The term includes an artificial limb, hand, or foot, but not an artificial eye, ear, finger, toe, dental appliance, or any cosmetic device. Prosthetics is the science and practice of measuring, designing, fitting, or servicing a prosthesis.

**DIGEST:** SB 141 would amend the requirements to receive a license to practice orthotics and prosthetics from the Texas Board of Orthotics and

Prosthetics (TBOP).

The bill would add the holding of a graduate degree in orthotics and prosthetics from an accredited education or practitioner program to the current requirement that a licensed orthotist or prosthetist hold either a bachelor's degree in orthotics and prosthetics or, if a separate subject, a certificate from an accredited practitioner education program.

SB 141 would amend the clinical residency requirement for a license by replacing the provision that an applicant complete at least 1,900 hours of professional clinical residency with a requirement that the applicant complete a professional clinical residency that met TBOP's standards, which at minimum would have to meet the standards set by the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education.

The bill would add the completion of a graduate degree in orthotics and prosthetics from an accredited education or practitioner program to the current requirement that an individual working toward fulfilling the requirements for a license be issued a student registration certificate if the person held either a bachelor's degree in orthotics and prosthetics or, if a separate subject, a certificate from an accredited practitioner education program.

TBOP also could issue a student registration certificate to a student currently enrolled in an accredited Texas graduate program in orthotics and prosthetics that incorporates a professional clinical residency and who submitted to TBOP a written certification from their graduate program that they had completed the academic prerequisites to enter a professional clinical residency.

The bill would direct TBOP to adopt rules to implement the bill's changes by December 1, 2013.

SB 141 would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2013, and would apply only to applications for a license or student registration certificate submitted to TBOP on or after January 1, 2014.