Legislative Analysis

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DENTAL SPECIALIST TITLE

House Bill 4593 (H-2) as referred to second committee
Sponsor: Rep. Matthew Bierlein

House Bill 4594 (H-1) as reported from committee
Sponsor: Rep. Jasper R. Martus

1st Committee: Health Policy
2nd Committee (HB 4593): Rules
Complete to 1-21-26

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4593 would amend the Public Health Code to prohibit a dentist from presenting themselves as a specialist in any of the recognized specialty fields unless they hold the appropriate license. The bill would also bar dentists from claiming to specialize in areas of dentistry for which a specialty field license does not exist under the code.

Under current law, the Board of Dentistry may issue specialty field licenses to dentists who complete advanced training and demonstrate competence in one or more of 12 recognized fields: prosthodontics, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, oral pathology, oral medicine, orofacial pain, dental public health, oral and maxillofacial radiology, and dental anesthesiology. Dentists without a specialty license may still perform procedures in these areas.

The bill would expressly prevent dentists without an official specialty license from advertising or representing themselves as specialists in any of the fields listed in the code, as well as in any unrecognized or unofficial fields.

MCL 333.16608

House Bill 4594 would amend the Public Health Code to add the term "dental specialist" to the list of reserved professional titles that may only be used by individuals who have obtained the necessary qualifications and licensing.

Under the code, certain titles, such as "dentist," are restricted to use by licensed health professionals. The bill would add "dental specialist" to that list, prohibiting individuals without the proper specialty license from representing themselves using that title.

The bill cannot take effect unless House Bill 4593 is also enacted.

MCL 333.16605

Each bill's provisions would be effective 90 days after the bill is enacted.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bills 4593 and 4594 would likely have minimal to no fiscal impact on the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). House Bill 4593 would prohibit dentists who have not been issued a health profession specialty field license from presenting themselves as dental specialists. This may create potential violations that LARA may investigate and issue disciplinary actions for. To the extent that violations of the new provisions occur, additional fine revenue may be realized and enforcement costs incurred.

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