

Assembly Bill No. 2872

CHAPTER 1136

An act to add Section 2104.5 to the Business and Professions Code, relating to healing arts.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2002. Filed
with Secretary of State September 30, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2872, Thomson. Healing arts: physicians and surgeons.

Existing law, the Medical Practice Act, establishes requirements that a graduate of a medical school located outside of the United States or Canada is required to satisfy for licensure by the Medical Board of California as a physician and surgeon. These requirements include the successful completion of one academic year of a supervised clinical training program that is under the direction of an approved medical school.

This bill would make various findings by the Legislature, including that medical schools located within California no longer offer this clinical training program, described as the "Fifth Pathway Program." The bill would require the board, in consultation with these medical schools, the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, and other designated persons to study methods to reactivate the Fifth Pathway Program in medical schools located in this state. The bill would require the board to report its findings to the Legislature on or before July 1, 2003.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) The Fifth Pathway Program allows a citizen of the United States who attended medical school in a foreign country and completed one academic year of supervised clinical training in an approved medical school located in the United States and one year of a residency program, to apply for licensure as a physician and surgeon.

(2) The clinical training component of the Fifth Pathway Program is not currently offered in medical schools located in California.

(3) The Fifth Pathway Program is currently utilized successfully in New York, and has been utilized successfully in California in the past, to increase the number of physicians and surgeons who have an

understanding of foreign cultures and a proficiency in a foreign language that they obtained while attending medical school in a foreign country.

(4) California is currently experiencing a shortage of health care providers with the cultural and linguistic competency to serve the state's diverse population, which has contributed to a lack of access to care in many immigrant communities.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to facilitate the establishment of one or more Fifth Pathway Programs at approved medical schools in California so that United States citizens who have graduated from a medical school in a foreign country can more easily obtain licensure in this state.

SEC. 2. Section 2104.5 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

2104.5. The board, in consultation with various medical schools located in California, the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, and executive directors and medical directors of nonprofit community health centers, hospital administrators, and medical directors with experience hiring graduates of the Fifth Pathway Program or foreign medical school graduates shall study methods to reactivate the Fifth Pathway Program in medical schools located in this state. The executive directors and medical directors of nonprofit community health centers, the hospital administrators, and the medical directors should serve or work with underserved populations or in facilities located in medically underserved communities or in health professional shortage areas. The board shall submit a report to the Legislature on or before July 1, 2003, that shall include options for the Legislature to consider in order to facilitate the establishment of one or more Fifth Pathway Programs in medical schools located in California. The study shall focus on whether the Fifth Pathway Program can address the needs of areas where a shortage of providers exists, communities with a non-English speaking population in need of medical providers who speak their native language and understand their culture, and whether it can provide greater provider stability in these communities.

