

18A:63B-1 to 18A:63B-6

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

(Optometry Schools-State Board of Education may contract with out of State Schools.)

NJSA 18A:63B-1 to 18A:63B-6

Laws of 1977 Chapter 420

Bill No. S910

Sponsor(s) Merlino, Fay

Date Introduced Pre-filed

Committee: Assembly Education

Senate Education; Revenue, Finance & Appropriations

Amended during passage Yes xix Amendments during passage denoted by asterisks.

Date of passage: Assembly April 28, 1977

Senate October 17, 1977

Date of approval February 25, 1978

Following statements are attached if available:

Sponsor statement	Yes	No
Committee Statement: Assembly	Yes	No
Senate	Yes	No 4-18-77 & 9-23-70
Fiscal Note	Yes	No
Veto message	Yes	No
Message on signing	Yes	No

Following were printed:

Reports	Yes	No
Hearings	Yes	No

974.90 N.J. Legislature. Assembly.
 C697 Legislative Oversight Committee.
 1978c Review of the implementation
 of P.L.1977, c.420. Trenton, 1978.

10/4/76

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[THIRD OFFICIAL COPY REPRINT]

SENATE, No. 910

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1976 SESSION

By Senators MERLINO and FAY

AN ACT concerning optometric education, supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes and making an appropriation.

1 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
2 of New Jersey:

1 1. The Legislature finds and declares:

2 a. That the Health Manpower Report of the United States
3 Bureau of Labor Statistics recognizes an increasing need for ad-
4 ditional optometrists;

5 b. That New Jersey is experiencing a recognized shortage of
6 optometrists;

7 c. That at the present time, there are no existing facilities in the
8 State of New Jersey for the training of students to enter the pro-
9 fession of optometry; and

10 d. That increasing costs of optometric education programs in
11 our sister states have resulted in resistance to admission of New
12 Jersey students without contractual agreements between the states.

1 2. The State Board of Higher Education with the advice ***[and**
2 **consent]*** of the committee created by section 5 of this act ****[*and**
3 **within the limits of such funds as may be appropriated to the**
4 **Board of Higher Education for such purposes*]**** is hereby autho-
5 rized to contract with any and all schools of optometry accredited
6 by the New Jersey State Board of Optometrists for the acceptance
7 of students who are residents of New Jersey and have been so
8 for at least ****[12 months]**** **4 years** prior thereto and desire
9 to study optometry.

1 3. All such contracts shall be entered into by the New Jersey
2 State Board of Higher Education on behalf of the State through
3 the Contract Sponsorship Program of the American Optometric
4 Foundation or directly with one or more accredited schools of
5 optometry.

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

1 4. Institutional participants in this program shall maintain the
 2 same standards of admission for New Jersey applicants as are
 3 provided for applicants of their own ***[and other states]* *state***.

1 5. In order to assist the New Jersey State Board of Higher
 2 Education ***[for the purposes of this act for the fiscal year 1976-**
 2A **1977]* *in the administration of this program, there is hereby***
 3 established an advisory committee consisting of the following: (1)
 4 a representative of the New Jersey State Board of Optometrists
 5 **for a term of 4 years**; (2) a representative of the New Jersey
 6 Optometric Association **for a term of 4 years**; (3) four New
 7 Jersey optometrists appointed by the Governor for terms of 4
 8 years each. Of the first four appointees, one shall be appointed
 9 for 1 year, one for 2 years, one for 3 years and one for 4 years,
 10 as designated by the Governor; and (4) a public member appointed
 11 by the Governor for a term of 4 years.

1 6. Said advisory committee shall organize annually by the ap-
 2 pointment of one of its members as chairman and one as vice chair-
 3 man. Members shall serve without compensation, but shall be en-
 4 titled to all necessary expenses.

1 ***[7. There is hereby appropriated to the Department of Higher**
 2 **Education for the purposes of this act for the fiscal year 1976-1977**
 3 **the sum of \$100,000.00.]***

1 ****7. There is hereby appropriated to the Department of Higher**
 2 **Education for the purposes of this act for the fiscal year**
 3 *****[1976-77]*** ***1977-78*** the sum of \$100,000.00.****

1 ***[2.]* **[*7.*]** **8.** This act shall take effect immediately.**

1 5. In order to assist the New Jersey State Board of Higher
2 Education for the purposes of this act for the fiscal year 1976-1977
3 established an advisory committee consisting of the following: (1)
4 a representative of the New Jersey State Board of Optometrists;
5 (2) a representative of the New Jersey Optometric Association;
6 (3) four New Jersey optometrists appointed by the Governor for
7 terms of 4 years each. Of the first four appointees, one shall be
8 appointed for 1 year, one for 2 years, one for 3 years and one for 4
9 years, as designated by the Governor; and (4) a public member
10 appointed by the Governor for a term of 4 years.

1 6. Said advisory committee shall organize annually by the ap-
2 pointment of one of its members as chairman and one as vice chair-
3 man. Members shall serve without compensation, but shall be en-
4 titled to all necessary expenses.

1 7. There is hereby appropriated to the Department of Higher
2 Education for the purposes of this act for the fiscal year 1976-1977
3 the sum of \$100,000.00.

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

Numerous studies conducted have indicated that New Jersey is in need of additional optometrists and have recommended the establishment of a New Jersey School of Optometry. Until such time as a school of optometry is established in New Jersey, this interim program will provide the residents of our State with an opportunity to secure an optometric education.

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 910

[SECOND OFFICIAL COPY REPRINT]

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 26, 1977

The Assembly Education Committee favorably reports this bill and endorses the Senate Education Committee statement.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

The amendment makes a change in the appropriation from fiscal year 1976-77 to the present fiscal year 1977-78.

SENATE REVENUE, FINANCE AND
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
SENATE, No. 910

[OFFICIAL COPY REPRINT]
with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: APRIL 18, 1977

This bill authorizes the State Board of Higher Education to contract with any school of optometry, accredited by the New Jersey State Board of Optometrists, for the acceptance of New Jersey residents who desire to study optometry.

The Department of Higher Education has indicated its plan to contract for 25 student places. The Pennsylvania College of Optometry has indicated its willingness to enter into a long-term agreement to guarantee places for New Jersey residents. This program is like the current contract program for veterinary medical education.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amendments address two points in the bill. The residency requirements are changed from 12 months to 4 years to avoid the possibility of an individual establishing the minimum residency of 12 months solely for the purpose of taking advantage of the guaranteed placement. Further, the committee reinserted an appropriation of \$100,000.00 to permit a placement contract to be negotiated immediately.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 910

with Senate committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 23, 1976

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports this bill which authorizes the State Board of Higher Education, with the advice of an optometric advisory committee, to contract with schools of optometry to provide places for New Jersey residents.

SPONSOR:

Senator Merlino.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

As amended by the committee this bill does not have a specific appropriation. The Department of Higher Education plans to contract for 25 student places. Since the actual amount per student has not been determined, the committee has deleted the specific appropriation contained in the bill in order to permit the department to negotiate that figure. The estimated cost per student will be \$4,000.00 for an approximate appropriation in FY '78 of \$100,000.00.

BACKGROUND:

This proposal addresses the increasing difficulty New Jersey residents face in gaining admission to Colleges of Optometry, due to the adoption of admissions quotas by the colleges. Of the thirteen colleges of optometry in the United States, only three, Illinois, Massachusetts and the University of Pennsylvania Colleges of Optometry, are presently willing to accept New Jersey residents, although at reduced levels and with no future commitments. Most significant is the reduction of places at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. 80% of newly licensed optometrists in New Jersey are Pennsylvania graduates. In 1970, 56 New Jersey residents applied to Pennsylvania and 19 were admitted; in 1973 there were 84 applications and 12 admissions. Under a new "allocation system" proposed for 1976 only 8 places were to be available to New Jersey residents. After discussions between the Department of Higher Education and the Pennsylvania College of Optometry, this was increased to 17 places for September 1976. However, without some form of State support the number of places is expected to decrease in the future.

The problems in optometric education are similar to those in veterinary medical education: limited educational facilities; increasing admissions pressures; and, inflation which has increased the cost per student, precluded expansion, and made the colleges reluctant to support out-of-state students.

THE CONTRACT SYSTEM:

Many states have already established contractual arrangements with colleges of optometry. For example, 13 western states under the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education provide financial support for every student enrolled in the Pacific University College of Optometry, and 14 states are under contract with the Southern College of Optometry. In addition, the American Optometric Foundation has a Contract Sponsorship Program designed to act as a clearing house for contract placement efforts.

Under this system, the out-of-state student must meet the same admissions standards and must pay the same tuition as a state resident. The contracting state pays an additional subsidy to the institution to help meet the actual cost per student. Basically, the support is equivalent to that provided for students attending New Jersey public colleges.

New Jersey already has a contract program for veterinary medical education. This bill would establish a similar program for optometric education. The Department of Higher Education has indicated that places will be available at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. That college has indicated a willingness to enter into long-term agreements to provide a substantial number of places for New Jersey residents, and is prepared to make an immediate, firm commitment to this effect; however, there is no formal commitment at this time.

NEED PROJECTIONS:

According to projections developed by the Department of Higher Education, there is a current shortage of optometrists in New Jersey and this shortage will increase unless opportunities for optometric education are expanded. A contract program of 25 spaces per year should be adequate to meet projected State needs. This estimate is confirmed by data from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry which indicates that over 80% of New Jersey residents who graduate from the College establish their practices in New Jersey.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee has amended section 2 to provide that the committee established by this bill shall act only in an advisory capacity to the State Board of Higher Education.

Further, language authorizing an appropriation for the contract program has been included in section 2. Section 7, which makes a specific appropriation, has been deleted for the reasons stated above.

The amendment to section 4 clarifies the admissions requirements for New Jersey applicants in relation to residents of the state in which the school is located.

The remaining amendments are technical in nature.

POSITIONS ON THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION :

The Department of Higher Education and the New Jersey Optometric Association support this legislation. The New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology is opposed.