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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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Bill No: SB 387  
Author: Rubio (D)  
Amended: 6/16/25 in Assembly  
Vote: 21

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SENATE BUS., PROF. & ECON. DEV. COMMITTEE: 10-0, 4/7/25  
AYES: Ashby, Choi, Archuleta, Arreguín, Grayson, Menjivar, Niello,  
Smallwood-Cuevas, Umberg, Weber Pierson  
NO VOTE RECORDED: Strickland

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0, 6/3/25  
AYES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear,  
Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez,  
Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar,  
Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-  
Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener  
NO VOTE RECORDED: Reyes

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0, 7/17/25 (Consent) - See last page for vote

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**SUBJECT:** Physicians and surgeons: special faculty permits: academic medical  
centers

**SOURCE:** City of Hope

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**DIGEST:** This bill revises the requirements for a health facility to qualify as an  
academic medical center (AMC), for purposes of utilizing special faculty permit  
(SFP) holders.

*Assembly Amendments* require the individual representing AMCs on the SFP  
review committee to be from a facility that trains a minimum of 250 resident  
physicians in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)  
accredited residencies on an annual basis and authorizes the Medical Board of

California (MBC) to approve up to 5 applications for SFPs submitted by each AMC in any calendar year

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes a SFP and authorizes the holder of the permit to practice medicine within a medical school or any affiliated institution. Defines an “AMC” as an entity that meets specified requirements, including but not limited to:
  - a) The facility trains a minimum of 250 resident physicians in ACGME accredited residencies on an annual basis commencing each January;
  - b) The facility is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the ACGME. (Business and Professions (BPC) §2168(a)(1) and (2))
- 2) Authorizes a candidate who meets all of the following eligibility requirements to apply for a SFP:
  - a) The candidate is considered academically eminent. To be considered “academically eminent” the candidate must hold or has been offered a full-time academic appointment at the level of a full professor at an academic medical center or California medical school approved by the board;
  - b) The candidate possesses a current valid license to practice medicine issued from another state, country or other jurisdiction;
  - c) The candidate has not been convicted of a crime that would disqualify them from obtaining licensure as a physician or surgeon;
  - d) The candidate pays the fees prescribed for application for, and initial licensure as a physician and surgeon;
  - e) The candidate has not held the specified position in a medical school for a period of two years or more preceding the application. (The MBC may waive this requirement). (BPC § 2168.1(a))
- 3) Requires MBC to establish a review committee comprised of two members of the board, one a physician and surgeon and one a public member, one

representative from each of the medical schools, and one individual selected to represent academic medical centers in California. Requires the committee to make recommendations to MBC regarding applicants for division chief or head of a department or as nontenure track faculty. MBC may not approve more than five applicants in any calendar year. (BPC § 2168.1(c))

- 4) States that a SPF may be denied, suspended, or revoked for any violation that would be grounds for denial, suspension, or revocation of a physician and surgeon's certificate. (BPC § 2168.3)

This bill:

- 1) Updates the definition of AMC to include a facility that is a National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated comprehensive cancer center that trains a minimum of 25 residents or fellow physicians in ACGME accredited residencies annually.
- 2) Specifies that a NCI-designated facility in 1) above does not need to be accredited by WASC in order to qualify as an AMC.
- 3) Requires the individual representing AMCs on the SFP review committee to be from a facility that trains a minimum of 250 resident physicians in ACGME accredited residencies on an annual basis.
- 4) Authorizes MBC to approve up to 5 applications for SFPs submitted by each AMC in any calendar year.

## **Background**

*SFPs.* Physicians and surgeons who seek licensure in California by the MBC must complete three years of postgraduate training in order to remain licensed. MBC-approved postgraduate training includes training completed at a program accredited by the ACGME (if postgraduate training is completed in the United States and its territories) or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) and/or The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) if the postgraduate training is completed in Canada. There is no equivalency for postgraduate training completed in a country outside of the United States or Canada, thus the postgraduate training requirement for MBC applicants renders many foreign-trained and foreign-licensed physicians from becoming licensed in California without completing ACGME, RCPSC, or CFPC accredited postgraduate

training. However, there are narrow circumstances for these clinicians to legally practice in California, including the MBC SFP Program which allows physicians and surgeons eminent in their field to practice in California without meeting all of the training and examination requirements applicants for licensure are subject to.

The MBC is authorized to issue a SFP to a person who is deemed academically eminent under the provisions of BPC § 2168. In order for MBC to issue a SFP, the physician must meet the following eligibility requirements: they must be clearly outstanding in a specific field of medicine or surgery and offered a full-time academic appointment at the level of full professor, or have been offered a full-time academic appointment at the level of associate professor if a great need exists. The Act, as of 2021, authorizes AMCs to sponsor an academically eminent international physician for a SFP to practice medicine in the AMC and its affiliated institutions.

All SFP applicants are subject to the same fingerprint requirements and primary source documents as an applicant for a physician license. The MBC reports the SFP must be renewed every two years and the holder must have the dean certify that the permit holder continues to meet the eligibility criteria, is still employed at the sponsoring institution, continues to possess a current medical license in another state or country, and is not subject to permit denial under BPC section 480.

To verify a SFP holder's current status and public record, the public can search on the Board's website. The complaint process is the same for a SFP holder as it is for any complaint the Board receives for a licensed physician.

MBC has a Special Faculty Permit Review Committee (SFPRC) that reviews SFP applications and makes recommendations for approval or denial. The review committee consists of one representative from each of the eleven medical schools in California and two Board members, one physician and one public member, for a total of 13 members. The purpose of the committee is to evaluate the credentials of internationally trained physicians sponsored by a California medical school to determine if they are academically eminent in their specialty and therefore should be issued a SFP. The SFP will authorize the physician to practice with all of the rights and privileges of a California medical license in the sponsoring medical school and its affiliated hospitals.

*NCI-Designated Cancer Centers.* According to the National Cancer Institute, there are "73 NCI-designated cancer centers located in 37 states and the District of Columbia that are funded by NCI to deliver cutting-edge cancer treatment to

patients.” NCI-designated cancer centers meet rigorous standards and are recognized for their scientific leadership in laboratory research and are focused on state of the art clinical research to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer. A majority of the NCI-designated cancer centers are affiliated with university medical centers, while a few freestanding cancer centers focus on cancer research. 57 are considered Comprehensive Cancer Centers, recognized for their leadership, resources and significant transdisciplinary research. Nine are Clinical Cancer Centers, also recognized for their scientific leadership and resources, with a focus on clinical research, prevention measures and cancer control. The remaining seven qualify as Basic Laboratory Cancer Centers with a primary emphasis on laboratory research while working collaboratively with other institutions to advance new and better cancer treatments.

In California, currently there are eight NCI-designated comprehensive cancer centers with five residing within the University of California system; the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, Mores Cancer Center at UC San Diego, UCI Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center, and the UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center with the affiliated UCSF – John Muir Health Cancer Center located in Berkeley. In addition, there is the Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute - Cedars Sinai, the Stanford Cancer Institute, and the City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center.

NCI-designated comprehensive cancer centers are designed to treat all types and any stage of cancers in children and adults. In particular, the City of Hope, founded in 1913, is recognized as a top-ranked hospital for cancer care by the U.S. News & World Report and as a leader in research and innovation. For many patients living with cancer, clinical participation is a key component of care, with the City of Hope enrolling over 6,000 patients in clinical trials, providing a variety of treatment options for patients. In addition, the City of Hope provides comprehensive programs to cancer patients in bone marrow and stem cell transplants, immunotherapy and breakthrough cancer drugs. As a founding member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, the City of Hope is recognized for their world renowned experts and for their innovative treatment of complex and aggressive forms of cancer.

*Administrative changes under this bill.* AMCs that wish to utilize SFP holders must train a minimum of 250 residents or fellows and be ACGME and WASC-accredited, among other requirements. This bill will allow NCI-designated comprehensive cancer centers like the City of Hope, which do not train a large

volume of residents, to qualify as an AMC in order to utilize SFP holders, based on the fact that they train a minimum of 25 residents or fellows and are ACGME-accredited.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, the bill will not result in state costs.

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 8/14/25)

City of Hope (Source)  
Cedars-Sinai  
California Life Sciences Association  
California Medical Association  
Los Angeles County Medical Association  
Medical Board of California  
Orange County Medical Association  
Stanford Health Care  
The Latino Cancer Institute

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 8/14/25)

None received

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** City of Hope writes in support: “The innovative cancer treatment and research that takes place at the City of Hope could be greatly supplemented by participation in the Physician Special License Program, a program that permits international physicians who are not currently eligible for a Physicians and Surgeon’s License in California to provide specialized training to the academic medical center’s resident physicians while contributing to the life-saving treatment and research programs at the medical center.”

Stanford Health Care states, “City of Hope currently meets all of the faculty requirements currently in statute for a special faculty permit except for one: the volume requirement for trainees. This bill will modify the threshold of 250 resident physicians for purposes of the special faculty permit program to 25 resident or fellow physicians if the academic medical center they practice medicine at is an NCI-Comprehensive Cancer Center. By modifying the threshold of resident SB 387 will give City of Hope and other highly ranked NCI designated comprehensive cancer centers access to key physician experts that can make a significant

difference in the ability to excel in cancer research and life-saving treatments for cancer patients.”

California Life Sciences notes, “By modifying the current requirement for a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center to qualify as an academic medical center facilitates better quality and quantity of medical training statewide.”

According to the Los Angeles County Medical Association and the Orange County Medical Association, “SB 387 will support cancer research that can help California families by expanding the State’s ability to recruit top international cancer research physicians who specialize in developing innovative and life-saving cancer care services.”

The Latino Cancer Institute writes, “City of Hope speaks to the paucity of specialists including bilingual and bicultural experts to be able to turn the light on research and care of the largest ethnic population in California, the Latino population. At least a third of low income even middle income Latino cancer patients suffer an unequal burden when seeking quality precise cancer care from top notch Latino professionals. So of course The Institute hopes that some of the resident or fellow physician recruits will come from Latino and other underserved populations to level the playing field for quality care.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0, 7/17/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Alvarez, Bennett, Berman, Gallagher

Prepared by: Anna Billy / B., P. & E.D. /  
8/15/25 15:19:34

\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*