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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO REGISTERED NURSES.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a foreign nursing  
2 school graduate may obtain a license to practice as a registered  
3 nurse in Hawaii either by examination or by endorsement. A  
4 foreign nursing school graduate may obtain a license by  
5 endorsement if the applicant already possesses an unencumbered  
6 license as a registered nurse in another country and, in the  
7 opinion of the board of nursing, meets the qualifications  
8 required of registered nurses in Hawaii at the time of  
9 graduation. If a foreign nursing school graduate does not  
10 already possess a registered nurse license in another country,  
11 the applicant may obtain a Hawaii license by examination by  
12 passing the National Council Licensure Examination and by  
13 complying with applicable requirements of state law and board of  
14 nursing rules that regulate nursing.

15           Section 16-89-8(c), Hawaii Administrative Rules, requires  
16 that a school transcript of a foreign nursing school graduate  
17 applying for a license by examination be evaluated by a  
18 professional educational credential evaluator recognized by the

1 board and the applicant must arrange to have the evaluator send  
2 a report directly to the board. The Commission on Graduates of  
3 Foreign Nursing Schools fulfills this credential evaluation  
4 function by either issuing a certification through its  
5 international certification program at a cost of \$418, or by  
6 issuing a full education course-by-course report at a cost of  
7 \$378.

8 The international certification program is composed of  
9 three parts:

- 10 (1) A credentials review;
- 11 (2) The international qualifying examination; and
- 12 (3) An English proficiency examination.

13 The purpose of this Act is to clarify the appropriate  
14 requirement for a foreign nursing school graduate to furnish  
15 either a written certification or a full education course-by-  
16 course report as a condition of taking the licensing examination  
17 to obtain a license to practice as a registered nurse in Hawaii.  
18 Further, it allows the board of nursing to recognize other  
19 professional evaluators should federal immigration law require  
20 it.

21 SECTION 2. Section 457-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
22 amended by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

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1           "(f) Applicants applying for a license to practice as a  
2 registered nurse by examination shall submit to the board proof  
3 of eligibility. Applicants shall be eligible to apply for a  
4 license by examination if they have:

5           (1) Graduated from a registered nursing program at an  
6 educational institution in the United States or any  
7 territory or possession under the jurisdiction of the  
8 United States and are qualified as determined by the  
9 board through rules adopted pursuant to chapter 91;

10          (2) Graduated from a registered nursing program at an  
11 educational institution in a foreign jurisdiction [~~and~~  
12 ~~have had their transcripts evaluated by professional~~  
13 ~~evaluators designated by the board~~] and are considered  
14 qualified as determined by the board through rules  
15 adopted pursuant to chapter 91; after having completed  
16 one of the following reports by the Commission of  
17 Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools or other  
18 professional evaluator recognized by the board:

19          (A) Credentials Evaluation Service: Full Education  
20             Course-by-Course Report. Foreign-educated nurses  
21             who immigrated to the United States as sponsored  
22             family members of United States citizens and have

1           acquired family-sponsored green cards are only  
2           required to have their educational credentials  
3           evaluated by completing the Credential Evaluation  
4           Service. No English competency or Commission of  
5           Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools examination  
6           shall be required; or

7           (B) Certification Program: For nurses who are not  
8           sponsored family members of United States  
9           citizens and have not acquired family-sponsored  
10           green cards, United States Immigration requires  
11           that all nurses coming to the United States to  
12           work as nurses complete the VisaScreen  
13           (Commission of Graduates of Foreign Nursing  
14           Schools Certification Program), which includes an  
15           English competency exam, the Commission of  
16           Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools exam, and an  
17           education credentials evaluation; or

18           (3) Graduated with a bachelor's degree and satisfactorily  
19           completed the pre-licensure portion of a master's  
20           entry program in nursing at an accredited school of  
21           nursing in the United States or any territory or  
22           possession under the jurisdiction of the United States

1           that is recognized by the board or other state boards  
2           of nursing and are qualified as determined by the  
3           board."

4           SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
5 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

6           SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2009.

**Report Title:**

Registered Nurses; Foreign Graduates; Licensure Requirements

**Description:**

Clarifies the requirements for foreign nursing school graduates applying for a license to practice as a registered nurse by examination to apply for licensure through a credentials evaluation service or a certification program. (SD1)