

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1160

BY REPRESENTATIVE ECHOLS

PHYSICIANS: Provides relative to rural physician licenses

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 37:1275.3, relative to the practice of medicine; to provide for licensure of  
3 certain international physicians; to provide for a restricted rural physician license;  
4 to provide for eligibility requirements; to provide for practice limitations and  
5 supervision; to provide for conversion to an unrestricted license; to provide for rules;  
6 and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 37:1275.3 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §1275.3. Rural international physician; licensure; limitations

10 A. The board shall issue a restricted rural physician license to an applicant  
11 who meets all of the following requirements:

12 (1) Holds a medical degree from a medical school listed in the World  
13 Directory of Medical Schools.

14 (2) Has completed medical education substantially equivalent to a doctor of  
15 medicine or doctor of osteopathic medicine.

16 (3) Has successfully passed Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3 of the United States  
17 Medical Licensing Examination or an equivalent examination as determined and  
18 approved by the board.

19 (4) Possesses certification from the Educational Commission for Foreign  
20 Medical Graduates or equivalent credential verification approved by the board.

1           (5) Has completed at least three years of clinical practice, postgraduate  
2           training, or residency in another jurisdiction.

3           (6) Has successfully passed a criminal background check.

4           (7) Demonstrates proficiency in the English language sufficient to safely  
5           practice medicine.

6           B.(1)(a) A physician issued a restricted rural physician license in accordance  
7           with this Section shall practice only in a rural or medically underserved area of this  
8           state or at a medical facility or clinic approved by the Louisiana Department of  
9           Health or the board.

10           (b) For the purposes of this Section, "rural or medically underserved area"  
11           means either of the following:

12           (i) A parish or geographic area designated by the Louisiana Department of  
13           Health or the United States Department of Health and Human Services as a health  
14           professional shortage area or a medically underserved area.

15           (ii) A rural parish with a population of less than one hundred thousand  
16           residents based upon the latest federal decennial census.

17           (2) A physician issued a restricted rural physician license shall practice for  
18           a period of not less than two years under the supervision of a physician who meets  
19           all of the following criteria:

20           (a) He holds a full and unrestricted license to practice medicine in this state.

21           (b) He meets all requirements established by the board to serve as a  
22           supervising physician.

23           (c) He is registered with the board as a supervising physician in accordance  
24           with rules promulgated and adopted by the board.

25           (3) Upon successful completion of the supervision period, as documented by  
26           the supervising physician, the board may authorize the physician to continue practice  
27           without supervision within a rural or medically underserved area.

28           C.(1) A restricted rural physician license shall not any authorize any of the  
29           following:

1           (a) Practice of medicine outside a rural or medically underserved area  
2           approved in accordance with this Section.

3           (b) Ownership of a medical practice during the period of restricted licensure  
4           unless approved by the board.

5           (2) A violation of the practice location requirements of this Section shall  
6           result in suspension or revocation of the license by the board.

7           D. After five years of continuous practice in a rural or medically underserved  
8           area in accordance with this Section, the board shall grant the physician eligibility  
9           to apply for a full and unrestricted license to practice medicine in this state, if the  
10          physician meets all of the following criteria:

11           (1) Remains in good standing.

12           (2) Is not under investigation by the board at the time of application.

13           (3) Has not been subject to disciplinary action.

14           (4) Has satisfied all continuing medical education requirements.

15           E. The board shall promulgate and adopt rules to implement the provisions  
16          of this Section, including but not limited to rules governing all of the following:

17           (1) Application procedures.

18           (2) Supervision requirements.

19           (3) Credential verification standards.

20           (4) Evaluation of international medical education equivalency.

#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 1160 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Echols

**Abstract:** Creates a restricted rural physician license for international medical graduates who meet certain requirements.

Proposed law authorizes the La. St. Board of Medical Examiners (board) to issue a restricted rural physician license to certain international medical graduates.

Proposed law provides eligibility requirements, including medical education equivalency, passage of licensing examinations, certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign

Medical Graduates or equivalent, clinical experience, background check, and English proficiency.

Proposed law requires licensees to practice only in designated rural or medically underserved areas or at approved facilities, and requires compliance with annual renewal requirements.

Proposed law requires a minimum two-year supervision period under a qualified supervising physician and authorizes the board to permit unsupervised practice upon successful completion of the supervision period.

Proposed law provides limitations on the restricted license and provides for disciplinary action for violations.

Proposed law authorizes eligibility for a full and unrestricted license after five years of continuous practice in a rural or medically underserved area, subject to specified conditions.

Proposed law requires the board to promulgate rules and regulations to implement proposed law.

(Adds R.S. 37:1275.3)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Make technical corrections.