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**HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4001**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Sawyer and Manweller

TO THE LEGISLATURES OF THE STATES OF OREGON AND CALIFORNIA AND TO THE GOVERNORS OF THE STATES OF WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA:

We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent and petition as follows:

WHEREAS, Current and future residents of Washington, Oregon, and California who work in occupations that require a credential like a license, certification, or registration issued by the state and who move to or from one of the three states face barriers to immediately practicing their occupation in their new home state, despite generally being qualified to do so; and

WHEREAS, The White House's July 2015 report, Occupational Licensing: A Framework for Policymakers, brings attention to the need for states to collaborate on making occupational credentials more easily portable between states and to, when appropriate, reweigh the costs and benefits of existing licensing laws to ensure that every requirement addresses legitimate public health and safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, The 2015 White House report cites a study finding that in Washington over thirty percent of the workforce must hold a credential issued by the state in order to practice an occupation, that in Oregon over twenty-six percent of the workforce must hold such a credential, and that in California over twenty percent of the workforce must hold such a credential; the study also found that in Washington workers who must hold a credential spend an average of one hundred ninety-nine days fulfilling the education and experience requirements to receive their credential, that in Oregon workers spend an average of five hundred sixty-eight days fulfilling such requirements, and that in California workers spend an average of five hundred forty-nine days fulfilling such requirements; and

WHEREAS, The issue of cross-state portability of credentials, and occupational licensure laws generally, directly affects numerous people in Washington, Oregon, and California, and ensuring greater portability of occupational credentials between states requires a coordinated, strategic effort by the three states; and

WHEREAS, Although each of the three states currently authorizes some level of reciprocity for certain occupations, not all occupations allow for reciprocity to the same extent, if at all, and barriers to labor market entry and mobility imposed by each state may nevertheless remain that, upon closer scrutiny and with reference to how other states regulate or do not regulate the occupation, cannot fairly be said to be necessary to address legitimate public health and safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, The states of Washington, Oregon, and California, through their respective legislatures and governors, should begin discussions on coordinating legislation, regulations, and efforts to enable greater portability of occupational credentials between the three states with the goal that, generally, all workers should be able to begin work immediately in their new home state if the worker holds a credential issued by one of the three states, was practicing the occupation in that state, and then moves to one of the other three states and wants to immediately begin practicing the occupation; in some instances, this may require each state to reweigh the costs and benefits of occupational licensing requirements and eliminate any requirements that are not necessary to address legitimate public health and safety concerns to more closely align the laws and regulations of the three states with respect to each occupation that one of the states requires a credential to practice; and

WHEREAS, Federal grant money may be available for nonprofit organizations working with a group of states to accomplish this goal and Washington is interested in working with nonprofit organizations and other states to do so, especially along the West coast;

NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that:

(1) The leadership of the major political parties in the Oregon and California legislatures contact the leadership of the major political parties of the Washington legislature to begin discussions on coordinating legislation to increase the portability of occupational credentials between the three states, or to otherwise coordinate efforts to align the three states' laws and eliminate barriers to labor market entry and mobility that, upon reexamination, are not necessary to address legitimate public health and safety concerns; and

(2) The governors of Washington, Oregon, and California contact each other's offices to begin discussions on coordinating legislation and regulations to increase the portability of occupational credentials between the three states, or to otherwise coordinate efforts to align the three states' laws and regulations and eliminate barriers to labor market entry and mobility that, upon reexamination, are not necessary to address legitimate public health and safety concerns.

BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Governors of Washington, Oregon, and California, the President of the Oregon Senate, the Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives, the leaders of the two major political parties of the Oregon Senate and Oregon House of Representatives, the President of the California Senate, the Speaker of the California State Assembly, and the leaders of the two major political parties of the California Senate and the California State Assembly.