

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4001

As Reported by House Committee On:
Business & Financial Services

Brief Description: Concerning the coordination of legislation and regulations to increase the portability of occupational credentials between Washington, Oregon, and California.

Sponsors: Representatives Sawyer and Manweller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Business & Financial Services: 1/18/17, 1/24/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes findings about the percentage of the workforce in occupations requiring a state-issued credential and the burdens those workers may face when moving between states and wishing to immediately begin working in their new home state.
- Facilitates a discussion between Washington, Oregon, and California about coordinating legislation, regulations, and efforts to make occupational credentials more easily portable along the West Coast.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS & FINANCIAL SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Kirby, Chair; Reeves, Vice Chair; Vick, Ranking Minority Member; J. Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Bergquist, Blake, Jenkin, McCabe, Santos and Stanford.

Staff: Peter Clodfelter (786-7127).

Background:

All states regulate numerous occupations and require a license, certification, or registration in order to work in certain occupations. The level of education, experience, training, and the examination requirements, if applicable, with respect to those different occupations may vary from state to state. When a worker in an occupation requiring a credential to work in that occupation moves from one state to another and wishes to immediately begin working in the

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worker's new home state, generally, the worker must first satisfy the worker's new home state's requirements and obtain a new credential in the worker's new home state before working in the occupation.

Summary of Bill:

Attention is drawn to how many people work in occupations requiring a state-issued credential in Washington, Oregon, and California, citing statistics from the White House's July 2015 report, *Occupational Licensing: A Framework for Policymakers*. Attention is also drawn to the stated need for Washington, Oregon, and California to strategically coordinate efforts in making occupational credentials more easily portable between states, especially along the West Coast.

It is suggested that Washington, Oregon, and California collaborate to more closely align their occupational licensure laws and regulations. The goal is offered 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 working in the occupation in that state, and then moves to one of the other three states. It is noted that federal grant money may be available for nonprofit organizations working with a group of states to accomplish this goal and provides that Washington is interested in working with such organizations and other states to do so, especially along the West Coast.

The leadership of the major political parties in the Oregon and California legislatures is asked to 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 regulations and eliminate any barriers to labor market entry and mobility that, upon reexamination, are not necessary to address legitimate public health and safety concerns. Similarly, the governors of the three states are asked to begin discussions on coordinating legislation, regulations, and efforts to that same end.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is concerning that Washington has the third highest rate of occupational licensure in the United States. Occupational licensing laws can pose barriers to labor market entry and mobility, and make it difficult for people who move between states and want to immediately begin working in their new home state. Burdens may be especially felt by immigrants and people of color. The Legislature has passed legislation to ease burdens on military members and their spouses with respect to occupational licensing requirements, but there is more work to be done. Washington, Oregon, and California should work together to

make occupational credentials more easily portable between the states. Like Washington, a high percentage of workers are required to have an occupational credential to practice in their occupation in Oregon and California. If one state imposes licensing requirements beyond those of other states with respect to a given occupation, then there should be a process for that person to begin work immediately while meeting any additional requirements.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Sawyer, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.