
**Consumer Protection & Business
Committee**

HB 2357

Brief Description: Concerning professional license reform.

Sponsors: Representatives Hoff, Vick, Harris, Gildon, Barkis and Volz.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a review process for professional licensing regulations and requires a report be made to the legislature.

Hearing Date: 1/22/20

Staff: Robbi Kesler (786-7153).

Background:

The Department of Licensing (DOL) regulates a number of businesses and professions. For regulated professions, the DOL issues licenses and ensures compliance with professional standards and laws.

Examples of professions regulated directly by the DOL, or in coordination with a board or commission, include:

- architects,
- cosmetologists,
- funeral directors,
- real estate brokers, and
- security guards.

Requirements for a professional license, certificate, registration, or permit vary considerably. Some professions may require:

- college level coursework;

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- experience;
- an examination;
- some type of background check;
- a surety bond, insurance, or other minimum financial standards;
- minimum safety standards;
- continuing education for licensees; or
- duties of care for clients.

Many professions have provisions for some form of reciprocity or consideration of experience from other states or military service. In addition, the DOL and other licensing authorities must expedite the issuance of a broad range of professional licenses, certificates, registrations, or permits for qualified military spouses.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning in 2021, the Department of Licensing (DOL) must review and analyze all professional licensing regulations and prepare and submit an annual report to the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, and each legislator by August 31 of each year. DOL shall review 20 percent of the professional licensing per year, and complete a review of all professional licenses within five years.

The report shall include the DOL's recommendations regarding whether the professional licenses should be terminated, continued, or modified.

Report requirements include, but are not limited to:

- the title of the regulated occupation and the name of the board responsible for enforcement of the professional license;
- citation of the statutory or other authorization for the creation of the professional regulations and board;
- the number of members of the professional board and the process for how members are appointed;
- the qualifications for membership on the professional board;
- the number of times the professional board is required to meet annually, and a report of the number of times it actually met during the preceding five years;
- annual budget information for immediately preceding five years for which the information is practically available;
- the number of government certifications, professional licenses, and registrations the professional board has issued, revoked, denied, or assessed penalties against for the past five years;
- a review of why the professional regulations were created;
- a comparison of whether and how other states regulate the profession;
- a review and analysis of the hours or other amount of education, training, or experience required to obtain the license or credential;
- a summary of any regulatory changes made by the DOL or professional board as a result of the review, and
- a summary of any recommendations regarding whether the professional license should be terminated, continued, or modified.

The DOL is required to analyze whether the occupational regulations meet the state's professional licensing reform policies and recommend a course of action that is directly related to the need, consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the public. If the DOL recommends a change to a professional regulations, the DOL shall recommend the least restrictive regulation consistent with the public interest.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.