
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2355

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By House Consumer Protection & Business (originally sponsored by Representatives Vick, Hoff, Harris, Gildon, and Volz)

1 AN ACT Relating to alternative licensing standards of
2 professional licenses; adding a new section to chapter 43.24 RCW;
3 adding a new chapter to Title 18 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that there are
6 many ways to gain demonstrated competency of skills in a profession.
7 Furthermore, conditions such as educational requirements, course
8 fees, and training hours, which an individual must fulfill before
9 receiving an occupational license to practice in a profession, create
10 unnecessary barriers to an individual's right to employment if the
11 individual can demonstrate full competency of the skills required of
12 that profession.

13 (2) The legislature also finds that such redundant requirements
14 are likely to discriminate against people of color, low-income
15 individuals, and trained or untrained immigrant populations, who may
16 possess the ability to excel in a profession but lack the ability to
17 readily fulfill the occupational licensing requirements to practice.

18 (3) It is therefore the intent of the legislature to authorize
19 the Washington state department of licensing to develop a competency-
20 based assessment which allows individuals to demonstrate proficiency

1 of the knowledge and skills otherwise required by an occupational
2 licensing examination.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.24
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) The department of licensing may issue an occupational
6 license, without regard to other requirements, to an applicant if the
7 applicant meets all competency-based licensing requirements for a
8 specific occupational license issued by the department.

9 (2) For the purposes of this section:

10 (a) (i) "Competency-based licensing requirement" means a practical
11 assessment of knowledge and skills that clearly demonstrate a person
12 is prepared to engage in an occupation or profession regulated by the
13 department, and which the director of the department of licensing
14 determines is at least as effective as examination-based occupational
15 licensing requirements at demonstrating proficiency and protecting
16 the health and safety of the public.

17 (ii) "Competency-based licensing requirement" may include, but is
18 not limited to, any combination of training, experience, testing, or
19 observation.

20 (b) "Occupational license" means a license, certificate,
21 registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by law
22 or a state agency rule that must be obtained by an individual to
23 engage in a particular occupation or profession which is regulated by
24 the department of licensing.

25 (3) This section does not apply when there is a reciprocity
26 licensing agreement with a national organization in place to
27 facilitate reciprocal professional licensing of an individual
28 licensed in another state.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new chapter is added to Title 18 RCW to
30 read as follows:

31 (1) The department of licensing may issue an occupational
32 license, without regard to other requirements, to an applicant if the
33 applicant meets all competency-based licensing requirements for a
34 specific occupational license issued by the department.

35 (2) For the purposes of this section:

36 (a) (i) "Competency-based licensing requirement" means a practical
37 assessment of knowledge and skills that clearly demonstrate a person
38 is prepared to engage in an occupation or profession regulated by the

1 department, and which the director of the department of licensing
2 determines is at least as effective as examination-based occupational
3 licensing requirements at demonstrating proficiency and protecting
4 the health and safety of the public.

5 (ii) "Competency-based licensing requirement" may include, but is
6 not limited to, any combination of training, experience, testing, or
7 observation.

8 (b) "Occupational license" means a license, certificate,
9 registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by law
10 or a state agency rule that must be obtained by an individual to
11 engage in a particular occupation or profession which is regulated by
12 the department of licensing.

13 (3) This section does not apply when there is a reciprocity
14 licensing agreement with a national organization in place to
15 facilitate reciprocal professional licensing of an individual
16 licensed in another state.

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