

SB 304 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Labor and Business

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 1/31, 2/7, 3/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes the Task Force on Occupational Licensing to study value of an occupational licensing regulatory agency. Directs Task Force to report to Legislative Assembly within 30 days of its final meeting or when the President and Speaker designate. Sunsets December 31, 2024. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Challenges presented to immigrants or refugees in obtaining occupational licenses in areas where they were formerly credentialed
- Composition and staffing of the Task Force on Occupational Licensing
- Need for task force to study regulatory models for overseeing occupational licensing boards

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Reduces membership of Task Force on Occupational Licensing (Task Force) from nine to eight members. Adds requirement that Task Force seek input on occupational licensing from specified persons and entities.

BACKGROUND:

Occupational licensing laws and regulations require workers in certain fields to meet specified qualifications in training, testing, or education before beginning employment. Nationally, occupational licensing requirements have grown over the last several decades. The National Conference of State Legislatures found that the number of jobs requiring a license or approval to practice has grown from about 1-in-20 to almost 1-in-4 in the last 60 years.

Regulatory models overseeing occupational licenses vary across the country. One study of occupational licensing regulatory structures surveyed entities across the nation, receiving 161 responses from 45 states and the District of Columbia. The report noted that regulatory models generally fall into one of five types. Those models are: a) fully autonomous/independent; b) autonomous but with a central agency responsible for housekeeping/ administrative functions; c) autonomous/ independent decision-making authority but with a central agency responsible for housekeeping/ administration, budget, personnel, investigations, and discipline; d) central agency with decision-making authority on all substantive matters while boards are delegated responsibility for some functions; and, e) central agency, commission, or council with final decision-making authority and boards serving only an advisory capacity. The report found that 26 of the responding jurisdictions, including Oregon, reported that all of their licensing boards have autonomous of decision making in place using either model a, b, or c.

Senate Bill 304 establishes the Task Force on Occupational Licensing to study the value of an occupational licensing regulatory agency.