Testimony on Raised Bill 5586

Submitted by Joe Horvath, Director of Legislative Outreach

April 2, 2018

I would first like to thank the committee for taking this testimony. My name is Joe Horvath. I am the Director of Legislative Outreach for the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, a Connecticut-based free market think tank. I am submitting comment in support of HB 5586.

Occupational licensing has a disproportionate (and negative) impact on employment for women, low-income individuals, young workers, and individuals of minority status. The more onerous a state's set of licensing requirements, the more negative the influence. Occupational licenses are, more often than not, a barrier to work and a job tax. This bill helps fix that.

HB 5586 is an excellent step in the gradual progress Connecticut has made in occupational licensing reform. From reducing barriers to work for the formerly incarcerated to eliminating licenses altogether, the General Assembly has made significant strides.

By eliminating initial licensing fees for certain categories of individuals, this proposal would increase employment opportunity for people who want to start a new career for themselves. Often times, the initial licensing fee for an individual is a barrier to entry, more so than many might realize. A $100 fee to be a pharmacy technician might sound like a small amount of money for someone currently employed, but for someone just starting out, that is a decision-informing sum.

This proposal enhances freedom and helps create jobs, as well as potentially improving the living conditions of Connecticut residents seeking to start themselves on a new path. Additionally, because Connecticut is always in need of young workers, this bill could serve as a model for a new method of retaining young workers.

While it would be ideal to expand the number of included occupations, there is no reason not to start with the ones enumerated in HB 5586. This is an excellent proposal and should receive serious considering from the committee.