

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5586

AN ACT WAIVING CERTAIN INITIAL OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING FEES FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS AND REQUIRING A STUDY OF OCCUPATIONAL

Title: LICENSING FEES CHARGED BY SURROUNDING STATES.

Vote Date: 4/5/2018

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 4/2/2018

File No.: 642

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Introduced by:

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Co-sponsors:

Rep. Terrie E. Wood, 141st Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

In an effort to increase employment opportunity for people who want to start a new career for themselves, this bill requires the Department of Consumer Protection to waive occupational licensing fees for barbers, hairdressers and cosmeticians, interior designers, and pharmacy technicians for applicants who are (1) low-income individuals (i.e., those receiving public assistance or having a household gross income of less than 130% of the federal poverty level); (2) veterans, armed forces members, or their spouses or surviving spouses; and (3) ages 18 to 25.

This bill also seeks to make Connecticut more competitive with its surrounding states by requiring the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) commissioner to (1) conduct a study comparing the occupational licensing fees charged by Connecticut and surrounding states and (2) by January 1, 2019, report his findings to the Commerce and Finance committees.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Joe Horvath, Director of Legislative Outreach, Yankee Institute for Public Policy

Mr. Horvath testified that 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.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None

Reported by: Tom Spinella

Date: 4/10/2018