

LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Resolution LWD-19-39

A RESOLUTION ON ELIMINATING DISPARITIES IN OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) recognizes from research that economic equity continues to be a problem in this country, with people of color and people with disabilities witnessing poorer rates of employment and earnings than majority populations;

WHEREAS, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics there were approximately 7.136 million unfilled jobs in the United States due in part to a shortage of workers with the necessary skills and qualifications to fill those positions;

WHEREAS, the largest gap is middle-skills jobs, requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree;

WHEREAS, research indicates that over the last sixty years, the number of jobs requiring an occupational license has increased from approximately 1 in 20 to more than 1 in 4 and when implemented properly, occupational licensing assists in the protection of the health and safety of consumers by requiring practitioners to undergo a designated amount of training and education in their respective field;

WHEREAS, licensing requirements vary substantially from state to state creates procedural problems for people holding a license, such as paperwork, fees, and additional training requirements;

WHEREAS, these disparities in licensing laws create barriers for people seeking to enter the labor market and make it more difficult for workers to relocate from state to state;

WHEREAS, state legislators are the policy-makers legislating licensure policies that prevent many people from relocating to find employment in other states where employment opportunities are available;

WHEREAS, the greatest negative impact of licensing policy due to the differences in policy laws across state-line, different classes of unemployed and dislocated workers people affected disproportionately;

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WHEREAS, in most occupations, it has been determined that licensing has a direct correlation with lower unemployment rates. However, a licensed worker in one state is hesitant to move to another state to find employment due to the money and time spent in a particular state to acquire the license; and

WHEREAS, that the NBCSL understands the ability for a person to earn better wages, maintain a decent quality of life, provide for their family, be productive and to be able to grow with employment opportunity is often-times dependent on a worker's mobility.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) supports federal and state legislation that removes the disparities in licensing laws that create barriers for workers to relocate across state-lines to find employment and to enter the labor market;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports reciprocity of occupational licenses among states;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages and supports federal legislation to increase federal occupational licensing reform grant funding to state governments working together to develop model legislation and implement laws that remove the barriers from states' licensing laws that prevent the portability of licenses across state-lines; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

SPONSOR: Senator Ronald Rice (NJ)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Labor and Workforce Development Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Chair(s): Senator Ronald L. Rice (NJ) and Senator Will Smith (MD)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is November 30, 2018

Ratification is certified by: Representative Gregory W. Porter (IN), President