



Proponent Testimony Senate Bill 10

Senate Committee on Commerce

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Chairman Olson, Vice Chair Steffen, Ranking Minority Member Holland, and members of the Committee. My name is Steve Greene and on behalf of the Opportunity Solutions Project, I want to thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony in support of SB 10. I also want to thank Senator Hilderbrand and other members of the legislature for bringing this bill forward, which sets the table for a really important conversation about occupational licensure reform.

Senate Bill 10 is about cleaning up the occupational code and keeping Kansas competitive. Some licensing requirements may make sense, but unnecessary barriers to work only hurt consumers, businesses, and job-seekers—especially those who are trying to work their way up the economic ladder.

By design, occupational licensing is designed to protect consumers and ensure quality. But experts from both sides of the aisle agree that occupational licensing has drifted from its original purpose.¹ We all know that competition is a good thing. It lowers prices, raises quality, and drives innovation. Kansas pays the price when regulations make it more difficult to enter a profession, and SB10 will help get Kansas back on track.

SB10 does this by requiring each licensing agency to take inventory of its occupational regulations and licenses to determine whether they are necessary for maintaining public safety, health, or welfare. The bill includes guiding questions to help agencies determine when to repeal or modify a regulation, or make a recommendation to the legislature. A meaningful review process is long-overdue, and it makes sense to revisit occupational licensing restrictions. SB10 is simply about transparency and accountability.

This is why SB10 also clarifies the process for individuals to challenge occupational rules and regulations, though this process doesn't apply just to licenses. This measure is just another safeguard. It will ensure that regulations are fair by creating a pathway for those affected most by regulations and provide feedback regarding its impact..

Arizona has already taken steps similar to the policies in SB10.² And Mississippi, Ohio, and Nebraska have also increased oversight and reform of licensing agencies in recent years. During my most recent role at the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, I was part of a Department wide initiative for regulatory reform and can speak to the benefit such overhaul has had in improving outdated regulations, creating a greater sense of stakeholder input, and improving public trust in a process that can appear to be cumbersome and full of red-tape.

SB 10 is an important step in ensuring Kansans have a pathway towards economic opportunity and realizing the American dream. Again, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 10 and am happy to answer any questions you may have.

¹ Trump Administration EO regarding occupational licensing:
<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-increasing-economic-geographic-mobility/>

Obama Administration report regarding occupational licensing:
https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/licensing_report_final_nonembargo.pdf

² Arizona's reform: https://azgovernor.gov/sites/default/files/executive_order_2017-03_0_0.pdf;
<https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/53leg/1R/bills/SB1437P.pdf>.