



HOUSE BILL 432 –LICENSURE RECOGNITION

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

OHIO STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

JANUARY 29, 2020

Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the Ohio House State and Local Government Committee, my name is Chris Ferruso. I am here on behalf of the nearly 22,000 governing members of the National Federation of Independent Business in Ohio (NFIB) to lend our support for House Bill 432, legislation that will, in certain circumstances, require Ohio licensing entities to recognize licenses from individuals practicing professions in other states. We applaud Representatives Lang and Powell for bringing for this concept and beginning the dialogue on accelerating the ability for certain individuals to practice a vocation.

By way of background, a typical NFIB member in Ohio employs 25 or fewer and does less than \$2 million in annual sales. Our members come from every industry type, and our organization looks like Main Street in any legislative district across Ohio.

As was articulated by Representative Powell during her sponsor testimony, the number of professions requiring licensure has increased significantly over the last 50 or so years. Many of these licensures intend to provide protections for public safety and welfare while allowing consumers to know an individual has training and knowledge in their respective industry. NFIB certainly supports preserving public safety and welfare and does not believe any individual can call him or herself a “licensed professional” without requisite training and validation. However, what we do suggest is for some individuals that have experience working in their profession and have been recognized as competent by another state or body, it makes sense to reduce hurdles to practice.

While every licensure may not be identical across the states, there are certainly licensures that are identical, or at least, very similar. The reality is licensed individuals do not lose their skills simply by leaving one state and coming to Ohio. We believe House Bill 432 contemplates situations to ensure individuals seeking licensure are qualified under existing Ohio requirements. For example, House Bill 432 stipulates if a licensing authority requires an individual to pass an exam on Ohio’s law and rules, they may do so for new applicants. The same holds true for other conditions such as criminal background checks and demonstration of financial responsibility which are also permitted under the legislation.

As a state with an aging workforce and a declining population that will likely lead to the loss of at least one additional congressional representative, we believe Ohio needs to find ways to encourage individuals who wish to or do relocate here, to be able to employ their skills in an expeditious manner.

We recently conducted a workforce development survey of our membership and 75 percent responding indicated they are having difficulty filling open positions. Of course, not all these employers have licensure requirements, but some certainly do. House Bill 432 provides an avenue for our members to have license-required positions filled in a more expedient manner. NFIB supports the intent of House Bill 432 to allow licensed and trained individuals to practice their vocation in Ohio as quickly as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to try and address any questions the committee may have.