



Historical Boilers Licensing Board Occupational Licensing Board Review Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee May 20, 2020

Chair McColley, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, my name is Aaron Johnston and I am here today to provide information on the Historical Boilers Licensing Board.

Following a catastrophic accident at a fair involving a historical boiler, the Historical Boilers Licensing Board (“Board”) was created in 2002. The Board was instituted to establish a licensing program for historical boiler operators to ensure that such persons have sufficient education, training, and experience to safely and competently operate such boilers in places open to the public, as well as the knowledge of how to respond to a low-water event involving the boiler or other hazardous situations that may arise. Additionally, the seven-member board adopts rules concerning inspection, operation, repair, and maintenance of historical boilers. The Board meets semi-annually with each meeting lasting roughly two hours.

The Board does not have a dedicated budget or staff. Instead, to increase efficiency and reduce costs, the Ohio Department of Commerce’s Division of Industrial Compliance (“Division”) provides staff and support to the Board, and the expenses and revenues for the Board’s program are included in the Division’s budget and funds. Roughly seven staff members in the Division support the operation of the Board and several boiler inspectors perform work in the field inspecting historical boilers.

Expenses for the board are limited to compensating board members for their actual expenses accrued in attending board meeting. The Division’s Chief Boiler Inspector, as an employee of Division, however, does not have expenses covered for attendance. Of the remaining members, annual expenses for attendance of board meetings total \$1,372. Average revenue generated from Board activities is fairly negligible, typically averaging \$550 per year.

If an individual wants to display/operate a historical boiler that they have preserved, restored, or maintained for hobby or demonstration, they must become a licensed historical boiler operator. However, it should be noted that the applicable licensing requirements only apply to the operation of such boilers in places “open to the public,” which is defined as a gathering of 125 or more people, and an exception is made for smaller boilers.

In order to become a licensed historical boiler operator, an individual must complete a board-approved historical boiler operator’s course, have at least 100 hours of operating experience or training with historical boilers, pass an exam, and pay a one-time fee of \$50. This license is valid for a lifetime unless revoked by the Board. Since its inception, the Board has issued 717 licenses to operate historical boilers. And at present, there are 116 active historical boilers in Ohio.

At least one other state specifically licenses historical boiler operators, that being Minnesota. The Board has entered into a reciprocity agreement with the State of Minnesota, whereby each state

recognizes the other's licensing of historical boiler operators. The licensing and renewal requirements in Minnesota are substantially equivalent to those in Ohio. The amount of regulation exercised by Ohio's Board appears comparable to that of other states that require historical boiler licenses as well.

In summary, the Historical Boilers Board is not believed to have inhibited economic growth, reduced efficiency, or impacted the ability of individuals seeking to enter an occupation or profession given the fact that historical boiler regulations only apply to boilers used for hobby or demonstration. Moreover, the operation of the Board is consistent with the legislative mandate expressed in the statutes that created and empowered the Board. Preservation of the Board is necessary to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare by ensuring that such boilers are operated safely and properly.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present information on this board, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.