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**Ohio Senate District 1**

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Sponsor Testimony – Senate Bill 246

Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee

Chairman Schuring, Vice Chairman Rulli, Ranking Member O’Brien, members of the Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on Senate Bill 246. This bill is yet another important step forward for Ohio, as we work toward ensuring an accessible workforce for all Ohioans, unencumbered by red tape and bureaucratic roadblocks that keep hard-working people sidelined.

One of the most common complaints I hear from employers in the 1st Senate District is that businesses want to expand, but there aren’t enough skilled workers to fill new openings. Yet, right now in Ohio, licensed workers coming from other states may have to repeat their education and training to work here, costing them precious time and money. Imagine packing up your family and moving all the way across the country, only to find that you can’t do your job in your new home state because your license doesn’t reciprocate. This does no favors for employers and workers alike, and if we truly want to expand Ohio’s workforce, we need to get these regulatory roadblocks out of the way.

As you may remember, in the 132nd General Assembly, I sponsored a broad, sweeping occupational licensure reform that created a regular occupational licensure review process for the legislature. In addition, this year the Senate passed Senate Bill 7 (now in conference committee), which will grant occupational license reciprocity for military spouses. These reforms represent great progress for Ohio workers, businesses, and families, but the work is far from done. Now, Senator Roegner and I have introduced legislation to allow ***any*** out-of-state licensee in good standing to obtain an Ohio license to practice their profession.

The bill accomplishes this by utilizing existing licensing authorities to administer licenses and rules, but requires the boards to grant a license to an applicant with an existing out-of-state license if the following conditions are met:

1. The applicant holds an out-of-state license or government certification for the same profession or occupation and at the same level of practice for which they are applying
2. The applicant has held that license or certification for at least one year
3. The applicant is in good standing in all jurisdictions in which they are licensed to practice their profession
4. The applicant satisfied minimum education, training, or experience requirements or passed an exam to receive their out-of-state license
5. The applicant has not surrendered a license or had a license revoked because of negligence or intentional misconduct related to their occupation
6. The applicant is not disqualified from obtaining a license or certification because of criminal offenses

If Ohio licenses their profession, but their home state does not, an applicant can also qualify for an Ohio occupational license if they have **three** years of experience at the same practice level, or a private certification and at least **two** years of experience at the same practice level. In addition, they must also be in good standing, not have had a license revoked or surrendered, and not be disqualified from having a license because of criminal offenses.

Simply put, if all of these conditions are met - if someone is trained and experienced in their field and has demonstrated the ability to do their job - there is absolutely no good reason we should prevent them from making a living in Ohio. Rather than force new Ohioans to repeat training for a profession they already know, we should be making it as simple as possible for them to make Ohio their home. This legislation will return common sense to the process, and allow workers from all over the country to come here and contribute to Ohio’s workforce.

Thank you again, Chairman Schuring and members of the committee for giving us the opportunity to testify today on Senate Bill 246. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.