



# OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## *BEFORE THE HOUSE STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 44*

Good afternoon, Chairman Wiggum, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and Members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 44. My name is Justin Barnes, and I am the Director of Workforce, Small Business, and Technology Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

As you may know, for 130 years, the Ohio Chamber has served as the state's leading business advocate, and we represent over 8,000 companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness, and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans. As part of our mission, we seek to make Ohio the best place in the country for businesses to operate and grow.

Senate Bill 44, introduced by Senator Brenner, seeks to require state departments and agencies that issue occupational licenses to adopt and integrate their application processes with the eLicense Ohio platform operated by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). It provides permission for a department or agency to allow paper applications if they so choose.

We thank the Senator for his work on this legislation and are proud to support it. Reducing the complexity and compliance burden of occupational licensure is a key recommendation highlighted in a study published by the Ohio Chamber in October 2022, *Blueprint for Ohio's Economic Future*. In addition to reducing the overall licensure burden where we can, it is important to take steps to modernize governmental processes in a way that eases administrative burdens for small businesses and professionals seeking occupational licensure.

This legislation and similar efforts to address burdensome licensure processes works to make Ohio's economy more competitive, allowing professionals to spend more time on their work and economic purpose and less time dealing with paperwork and red tape. By aligning state occupational licensure under one roof at DAS, we can streamline the processing of applications, reducing wait times and processing errors.

We look forward to working with you on this proposal to ensure Ohio's occupational licensure processes are as minimally invasive as possible. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation.