



HOUSE STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE – Proponent Testimony, HB  
203, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Chairman Wiggman, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to provide testimony.

My name is Jeff Dillon, and I am the Ohio Legislative Director for Americans for Prosperity (AFP). As one of the largest grassroots organizations in the country, AFP is driving long-term solutions to some of the country's biggest problems. Our organization, and its thousands of activists across Ohio, are dedicated to breaking barriers that stand in the way of people realizing their full potential. Removing or reducing these barriers, in whatever forms they take, helps move our society toward one of mutual benefit, where people succeed by helping others improve their lives and by transforming their communities. Accordingly, I am here to express support for House Bill 203.

While AFP believes the most effective form of licensing reform would be to remove unnecessary government licensing requirements within Ohio so that formal recognition would not be required in as many instances, we applaud Ohio for already making significant progress toward that goal as a result of enacting SB 255 in January of 2019, a sunset review of all existing government licenses.

HB 203 is a licensing recognition bill that would significantly reduce barriers to dozens of occupations between Ohio and the rest of the country, ultimately making Ohio a leader in removing interstate licensing barriers as well. HB 203 provides a path to a license in Ohio to individuals in the following instances:

- The applicant holds an out-of-state license or government certification for the same occupation and at the same level of practice for which they are applying
- The applicant has held that license or certification for at least one year

- The applicant is in good standing in all jurisdictions in which they are licensed to practice that profession
- The applicant satisfied minimum education, training, or experience requirements or passed an exam to receive their license or certification
- The applicant has not surrendered or had their license revoked because of negligence or misconduct related to their occupation
- The applicant is not disqualified from obtaining a license or certification because of criminal offenses

Today, licensing burdens reduce employment opportunities for many Ohioans while cutting off rungs on the economic mobility ladder for people trying to improve their lives. A recent national [study](#) found that current governmental licensing barriers already cost Ohio over 67,750 jobs, \$209 million in deadweight economic losses, and over \$6 billion in misallocated resources annually. In other words, people are spending more than they would have, and on different things, than if Ohio's many government licensing laws weren't creating barriers to needed products and services. Although HB 203 does not fully address these shortfalls, this reform in addition to the licensing review law that was enacted in 2019 can make significant inroads to improve opportunity in our state.

Since 2019, 11 states and counting have enacted versions of universal recognition, and all states implemented at least temporary measures during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow for medical professionals to work with licenses in other states, including for telehealth in many instances. In order to increase economic opportunity in the state and expand access to critical services for Ohioans, now is the time for leaders to reduce barriers preventing professionals from coming to work in our state.

Research also shows that in more onerously licensed states, [entrepreneurship](#) rates are lower among low-income residents, [recidivism](#) rates are higher for ex-offenders, and other unintended consequences such as [increased crime rates](#) occur due to decreased employment opportunities.

Ohioans, and those wishing to move to Ohio to contribute to our economy, deserve the dignity of personal choice as consumers and the ability to support their families without undue government burdens. While often well-intentioned, today many government occupational licensing requirements are anti-competitive, needlessly burdensome, and oftentimes [ineffective](#) at addressing public health and safety concerns, which are the rationale for the existence of many licenses in the first place. As we continue to drive internal occupational licensing reform, we urge you to support this legislation and opens our doors to more jobs and consumer choice in Ohio.

Chairman Wiggam, thank you again for the opportunity to offer testimony today, and I'm happy to do my best to answer any questions the committee might have.

*Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. AFP has more than 3.2 million activists across the nation, a local infrastructure that includes 36 state chapters, and has received financial support from more than 100,000 Americans in all 50 states. For more information, visit [www.AmericansForProsperity.org](http://www.AmericansForProsperity.org).*