



HB 258 Proponent Testimony to the Ohio House Economic & Workforce Development Committee, November 18, 2020 Chairman Zeltwanger, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Sobecki, 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.

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity in Ohio, I am before you today to testify in favor of House Bill 258, a bill that would ease the burden of some Ohio occupational licenses by offering new apprenticeship paths for dozens of professions.

AFP Ohio supports eliminating and reducing onerous government occupational licensing mandates to increase opportunities to earn a living in our state, asking leaders to rely instead on less onerous oversight that protects public health and safety without needlessly creating barriers to employment. As Ohio continues to make progress on reform in these areas, HB 258 offers an improvement over the status quo, ensuring that apprenticeships can serve as an additional path to earning government occupational licenses in multiple fields.

HB 258 would also ensure those utilizing an apprenticeship path have the same testing requirements, rather than more burdensome ones. The bill includes paths for dozens of professions like boiler operators, engineers, nonresidential specialty contractors, first responders, automotive collision repair, truck drivers, police officers, firefighters, veterinary assistants, and animal caretakers.

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.

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 deserve the dignity of personal choice as consumers and the ability to support their families without undue government burdens as they try to begin or change career paths. Today many government occupational licensing requirements are anti-competitive, needlessly burdensome, and [ineffective](#) at addressing public health and safety concerns. As we continue to drive occupational licensing reform, we urge you to support HB 258 to increase employment paths in a number of important Ohio professions.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for holding this hearing today, thank you Representative Powell for sponsoring this useful and timely legislation, and I'm happy to try 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 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.