



AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY®

WEST VIRGINIA

1/30/2020

Dear Lawmaker:

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity West Virginia Activists, I urge you to support Senate Bill 646, the Occupational Licensing Review Act. This vote may be recorded in our legislative scorecard.

SB 646 would establish a sunrise review of all proposed occupational licensing regulations and a recurring sunset review of all existing occupational licensing regulations to ensure that the least restrictive regulation consistent with public health and safety is utilized.

- For newly proposed occupational licensing regulations, the Joint Standing Committee on Government Organization would oversee the review process while the tasking the initial review of proposed occupational regulations to the Performance Evaluation and Research Division of the Office of the Legislative Auditor (PERD). The findings of PERD and the Joint Committee would be shared with any congressional committee considering new licensing legislation.
- Over a 5-year cycle, PERD would also provide an annual review and recommended actions on approximately 20 percent of existing occupational licenses to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the President of the Senate, chairs of each relevant committee, and the Governor.

Today, approximately 22% of West Virginians need a government license to perform their work. In a [study](#) documenting 102 common occupations across the 50 states, West Virginia licenses 70 of those with 37 [added](#) between 1993-2012 alone, highlighting the type of rapid growth that makes the Licensing Review Act timely for West Virginia.

We believe occupational licensing reform is critical to improving opportunity for job seekers and consumers in West Virginia by helping to ensure we do not cut off rungs on the economic mobility ladder for people trying to improve their lives. Research bears these concerns out: 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.

West Virginians 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 [ineffective](#) at addressing public health and safety concerns. For these reasons and more, we strongly urge you to support **SB 646**.

Sincerely,

Jason Huffman
West Virginia State Director
Americans for Prosperity