



### **Testimony on Governor's Bill 13**

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Good afternoon distinguished members of the Committee on General Law. We are writing in support of **Governor's Bill No. 13** An Act Expanding Economic Opportunity in Licensed Occupations, with changes. For questions or follow up, please contact [louise@yankeeinstitute.org](mailto:louise@yankeeinstitute.org); or [isabel@yankeeinstitute.org](mailto:isabel@yankeeinstitute.org).

We applaud Governor Lamont and this committee for addressing the barriers to entry occupational licensing creates in Connecticut. Excessive licensing hurts many different groups, including people with criminal records, military families, low-skilled workers, entrepreneurs, immigrants, and of course—consumers.

We've seen an appetite for occupational licensing reform in the state--in 2017, Connecticut eliminated several licenses that had no educational or training requirements—and we are excited to see continued reform efforts.

Section 8 of this bill addresses the issue of licensing reciprocity between states. Workers do not lose their job skills by crossing state lines, but our existing licensing laws often treat them as they do. This bill would make it easier for someone who is licensed in another state to move here and work here, making Connecticut a more welcoming place to small businesses, military families, and entrepreneurs.

Additionally, Yankee Institute served as a member of the employment subcommittee of the Council on the Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Record. We support section 6 of this bill, which calls for several departments to review the council's report and make recommendations for specific policies that will reduce or eliminate barriers to participation in licensed occupations.

We also support changes made in section 3. The ratio of journeymen to apprentices required in state law limits a business's ability to hire. This change is a good step towards limiting the burden the ratio places on employers, workers, and consumers.

The government should never stand in the way of individuals using the skills they have to earn a living. This bill works to limit some of the burden our state imposes through occupational licensing.

There are a few changes we would like to see made to the language of this bill to make it more effective;

1. The residency requirement in lines 160-164 should be removed. It does not make sense for a geographically small state like Connecticut to have this language. This would mean a person living across the border in Rhode Island or Massachusetts but working in Connecticut would not qualify. Similar bills enacted in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Missouri, and Nebraska do not have this requirement, and neither should Connecticut.
2. The type of exam described in lines 178-179 should be clarified. The bill's requirement for an examination is ambiguous. It is legitimate for Connecticut to require the applicant to have passed some type of skills exam, but the bill should not require the person to pass a second skills exam if the applicant has already passed an exam in the other state. The exception to that relates to an exam related to state law in Connecticut, like real estate law.
3. Eliminate lines 189 – 193. These lines grant plenary power to boards to deny a license for any reason. The explicit grant of power is unnecessary because concerns about applicants with criminal records is already addressed by lines 180-182 and their good standing is confirmable in line 170-177. These lines would cause bureaucratic delays at best, and at worst, empower boards to protect the status quo and the interest of current rent seekers.

Licensing recognition in this bill does not address Connecticut's current licensing requirements, which can be burdensome. We urge the legislature to consider additional reform to licensing requirements to further ease or eliminate licensing barriers in the state. Enacting sunrise and sunset provisions, for example, would prevent new, burdensome licenses and identify and eliminate existing burdensome licenses.

This bill should have bipartisan support, and we urge its passage.