



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

March 5th, 2020

Testimony of Secretary Melissa McCaw, Office of Policy and Management

In Support of **Senate Bill 13 AN ACT EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN LICENSED OCCUPATIONS.**

Chairs Maroney & D'Agostino, Vice Chairs Leone & Gibson, Ranking Members Witkos & Cheeseman, and honorable members of the General Law Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **Senate Bill 13 AN ACT EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN LICENSED OCCUPATIONS.** This bill would modernize Connecticut's occupational licensing system in many ways. Primarily, the proposal would transition more licenses to an online renewal system, expedite the recognition process for licenses conferred outside of Connecticut, permit certain initial or continuing education training to be done online, limit which criminal convictions can prevent an individual from seeking licensure(s), and study the removal of barriers to entry that vulnerable populations face. The bill will help achieve Governor Lamont's objective to get Connecticut's economy growing again and expand job opportunities for Connecticut residents.

As the Vice Chair of the Governor's Council on Women and Girls, I would like to highlight my support of Section 8 of the bill, which would ensure a smoother process for military spouses when they seek Connecticut's recognition of a professional certification and/or license obtained elsewhere. The Council is focused on championing policies that will ensure women and girls across Connecticut have economic opportunities, access to quality education and healthcare, and grow as leaders in both the private and public sectors. The purpose of the Council's Economic Opportunity and Workforce Equity Subcommittee is to *identify financial barriers that disproportionately hinder women and girls, including (but not limited to) pay and work environment disparities that inhibit fair performance evaluation and advancement in the workplace.* Over 90% of military spouses are women and they often move between states with their partners due to new military assignments. If obstacles in recognizing out-of-state licenses and certification are removed, these women can enter our state's workforce faster and obtain gainful employment shortly after their arrival. Additionally, this policy keeps military families together in their move to Connecticut. The brave men and women of our military and their families deserve our support of this proposal.

I also support section 4, which allows subject matter experts at state agencies, licensing boards, and national associations to approve online courses for credit toward education requirements in licensed professions. Because of their lower income and disproportionate family and household obligations, women will especially benefit from access to more affordable courses with more flexible schedules.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my position and am available should you have any further questions.



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