



Emerging Policy Issues: Friend or Foe?

Professional Certification & Occupational Licensure Reform

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Highlights

- Professional certification – brief overview
- Professional Certification Coalition
- State legislation, regulations and portability
- Federal legislation
- Q & A



Professional Certification

- Promotes competition through informed choice
- Provides credibility, recognition, job satisfaction and increased earning power / enhanced prospects
- Certification vs. licensure
- State legislation to reform occupational licensure laws:
 - Occupational reform packages
 - Government vs. private certification
 - Consumer choice
 - Right to Earn a Living
 - Ex-offender re-entry



Professional Certification Coalition (PCC)

- Established July 2018; 115 member organizations
- ASAE, Institute for Credentialing Excellence and Pillsbury law firm
- Advocates legislation that avoids restrictions on voluntary professional certification programs
- Over 80 bills across 38 states
- Engages policymakers and stakeholder organizations

PCC LEADERSHIP



State Legislation

- **Pennsylvania House Bill 811**
 - Appears to restrict use of "certified" to designations issued by state only
 - Could interfere with ethics enforcement of private certifications organizations
 - PCC: grassroots advocacy and direct lobbying in PA
- **Michigan House Bill 4488**
 - Would prohibit licensure action based on civil judgement against an individual
 - Would prohibit a licensure action based on any misdemeanor or felony that doesn't trigger MI's interest in protecting "public safety"
 - Boards cannot take action based on any public record "related to" a conviction



Regulations & Certification / License Portability

- Currently no major federal regulations
- **June 2018 – US DOL issued \$7 million to states:**
 - CO, KS, KY, NV, NH, ND, OK, PA, VT, Council of State Governments, National Conference of State Legislators*
- States are main regulatory bodies to establish certification / licensure reciprocity
- **State-state standards do not always align**

*Also received 2017 grant



Federal Legislation

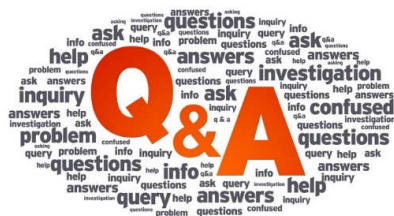
- **S. 379**
 - Sen. Amy Klobuchar
 - Expands use of 529 education plans for expenses associated with postsecondary credentials
 - PCC supports
- **Next Step Act (H.R. 1893 / S. 697)**
 - Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman & Sen. Cory Booker
 - Criminal justice reform bill
 - Removes barriers for people with criminal convictions to pursue occupational licenses
 - As drafted, applies to "occupational certification authorities"
- **Break the Higher Education Monopoly Act of 2019 (S. 2123)**
 - Sen. Josh Hawley
 - Amends federal Pell Grant Program to support career training opportunities
 - Directs Secretary of Education to "devise an alternative certification program"



Certified Takeaway

"The laudable objectives of occupational licensing reform should be balanced with the protections to public health, safety and welfare derived from professional certification and should not place obstacles to informed consumer choice in seeking high quality professional services." -PCC





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