



## State of Connecticut

### SENATE

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August 17, 2017

Mr. Geoff King, Senior Policy Analyst  
National Governors Association  
444 North Capitol Street NY #267  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. King

I write with enthusiasm and in strong support of the Request for Applications for *Occupational Licensing: Assessing State Policy and Practice* submitted by the Connecticut Departments of Labor, Public Health and Consumer and Protection.

A July 2015 report from the Department of the Treasury Office of Economic Policy, the Council of Economic Advisors, and the U.S. Department of Labor found that the percent of workers licensed at the State level has risen five-fold since the 1950s. Specifically, in Connecticut, there are over 65 health-related professional license categories and more than 200 types of licenses for a myriad of jobs and businesses. Consequently, it becomes necessary to review, from time to time, whether aspects of our current system of occupational licensing are overly burdensome and potentially pose barriers to employment opportunities for those occupations. While we understand a critical function of state government is to safeguard consumers and workers, a thorough review and examination of occupational licenses issued by the Department of Consumer Protection and Public Health is overdue.

This past legislative session, my Democratic counterpart Senator Bob Duff and I, worked together to craft bipartisan legislation that reduced the number of occupational licenses needed in our state. We did this because we realize that creating impediments to the work force that have no relation to public health or safety simply make it more difficult for those seeking employment to do so. Unfortunately, due to the efforts of special interest groups looking to protect the limited number of people that can apply for such jobs, we were only able to eliminate six licenses - but it's a start. We hope to continue this effort next session and with the assistance that would be provided from the NGA eliminate even more hurdles to employment for the resident of our state.

We are committed to being a full and active partner with the Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Competitiveness in the Occupational Licensing Policy Learning Consortium, which provides a unique opportunity to learn from our colleagues in other states in order to strike a better balance between the needs of consumers and the healthy growth of business and industry in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Kevin Witkos  
Deputy Senate Republican President Pro Tempore

AVON, BARKHAMSTED, CANTON, COLEBROOK, GRANBY,  
HARTLAND, HARWINTON, NEW HARTFORD, NORFOLK, SIMSBURY, TORRINGTON