

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 26, 2024

3:20 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Jesse Sumner, Chair  
Representative Justin Ruffridge, Vice Chair  
Representative Mike Prax  
Representative Dan Saddler  
Representative Ashley Carrick

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Stanley Wright  
Representative Zack Fields

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 228

"An Act extending the termination date of the Board of Massage Therapists; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 228 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 298

"An Act relating to the posting of warning signs for alcoholic beverages."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 277

"An Act relating to occupational licensing; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 228

SHORT TITLE: EXTEND BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS

SPONSOR(s): LABOR & COMMERCE

02/12/24	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/12/24	(S)	L&C, FIN
02/26/24	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

02/26/24 (S) Moved SB 228 Out of Committee  
 02/26/24 (S) MINUTE(L&C)  
 02/28/24 (S) L&C RPT 5DP  
 02/28/24 (S) DP: BJORKMAN, MERRICK, GRAY-JACKSON,  
 BISHOP, DUNBAR  
 04/03/24 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
 04/03/24 (S) Heard & Held  
 04/03/24 (S) MINUTE(FIN)  
 04/04/24 (S) FIN RPT 4DP 1NR  
 04/04/24 (S) DP: OLSON, KIEHL, MERRICK, BISHOP  
 04/04/24 (S) NR: STEDMAN  
 04/04/24 (S) FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532  
 04/04/24 (S) Moved SB 228 Out of Committee  
 04/04/24 (S) MINUTE(FIN)  
 04/11/24 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)  
 04/11/24 (S) VERSION: SB 228  
 04/12/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 04/12/24 (H) L&C, FIN  
 04/19/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
 04/19/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
 04/24/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
 04/24/24 (H) Heard & Held  
 04/24/24 (H) MINUTE(L&C)  
 04/26/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 298

SHORT TITLE: ALCOHOL WARNING SIGNS ON LIC. PREMISES

SPONSOR(s): GRAY

01/29/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 01/29/24 (H) HSS, L&C  
 01/31/24 (H) SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE INTRODUCED  
 01/31/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
 01/31/24 (H) HSS, L&C  
 03/12/24 (H) HSS AT 3:00 PM DAVIS 106  
 03/12/24 (H) Heard & Held  
 03/12/24 (H) MINUTE(HSS)  
 03/21/24 (H) HSS AT 3:00 PM DAVIS 106  
 03/21/24 (H) Moved CSSSHB 298(HSS) Out of Committee  
 03/21/24 (H) MINUTE(HSS)  
 03/25/24 (H) HSS RPT CS(HSS) 2DP 5NR  
 03/25/24 (H) DP: MCCORMICK, MINA  
 03/25/24 (H) NR: FIELDS, SUMNER, RUFFRIDGE, SADDLER,  
 PRAX  
 04/01/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124  
 04/01/24 (H) Heard & Held  
 04/01/24 (H) MINUTE(L&C)

04/26/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

BILL: HB 277

SHORT TITLE: LICENSING RECIPROCITY; FEES

SPONSOR(S): WAYS & MEANS

01/18/24 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
01/18/24 (H) W&M, L&C, FIN  
03/20/24 (H) W&M AT 6:00 PM DAVIS 106  
03/20/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
03/27/24 (H) W&M AT 6:00 PM DAVIS 106  
03/27/24 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>  
04/03/24 (H) W&M AT 6:00 PM DAVIS 106  
04/03/24 (H) Heard & Held  
04/03/24 (H) MINUTE (W&M)  
04/10/24 (H) W&M AT 6:00 PM DAVIS 106  
04/10/24 (H) -- MEETING CANCELED --  
04/15/24 (H) W&M AT 6:00 PM DAVIS 106  
04/15/24 (H) Moved CSHB 277 (W&M) Out of Committee  
04/15/24 (H) MINUTE (W&M)  
04/17/24 (H) W&M RPT CS (W&M) NEW TITLE 5DP 2AM  
04/17/24 (H) DP: MCKAY, MCCABE, ALLARD, TILTON,  
CARPENTER  
04/17/24 (H) AM: GRAY, GROH  
04/26/24 (H) L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

**WITNESS REGISTER**

JILL MOTZ, representing self

Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 228.

VOLKER HRUBY, representing self

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 228.

NOELLE LOCONTE, PhD, Faculty Member

Division of Hematology, Medical Oncology, and Palliative Care

Department of Medicine

University of Wisconsin

Madison, Wisconsin

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 298.

ROXANNE JONES, Family Physician

Alaska Academy of Family Physicians

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 298.

REPRESENTATIVE BEN CARPENTER  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, presented CSHB 277(W&M).

ALASDAIR WHITNEY, Legislative Counsel  
Institute for Justice  
(No address provided)

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave invited testimony in support of CSHB 277(W&M).

DONNA ARDUIN, Staff  
Representative Ben Carpenter  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on CSHB 277(W&M) on behalf of Representative Carpenter, prime sponsor.

KENDRA BROUSSARD, Staff  
Representative Ben Carpenter  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Read the sectional analysis for HB 277 on behalf of Representative Carpenter, prime sponsor.

SYLVAN ROBB, Director  
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on CSHB 277(W&M).

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:20:16 PM](#)

**CHAIR JESSE SUMNER** called the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:20 p.m. Representatives Saddler, Prax, Carrick, Ruffridge, and Sumner were present at the call to order.

^#sb228

#### **SB 228-EXTEND BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS**

[3:21:09 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the first order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 228, "An Act extending the termination date of the Board of Massage Therapists; and providing for an effective date."

[3:21:38 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER opened public testimony on SB 228.

[3:22:08 PM](#)

JILL MOTZ, representing self, testified in support of SB 228. She said she believes the Board of Massage Therapists ("the board") serves three main purposes: providing public safety; helping to combat human trafficking; and monitoring trends in massage therapy ethics. She said the board should be allowed to continue growing and asked members to move the bill out of committee today.

[3:24:56 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER questioned the expense incurred on regulatory investigations.

MS. MOTZ said she did not have the numbers; however, the cost is substantial and can vary widely from year to year.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether there are enough massage therapists licensed in Alaska to fill demand.

MS. MOTZ shared her belief that there are plenty of massage therapists in Alaska. She pointed out that two new schools were created in the last few years in Fairbanks and the Mat-Su valley as communities have realized the need for local training.

[3:26:52 PM](#)

VOLKER HRUBY, representing self, testified in support of SB 228. He said continuing the board would give massage therapists a voice and input in the profession. He explained that extending the board would help keep costs down, increase efficiency, and protect the profession from illegal entities. He urged members to pass SB 228.

[3:28:55 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether the board gives applicants a certificate that can be displayed on a wall or used in advertising.

MR. HRUBY answered yes, certificates can be downloaded and printed. He added that displaying the certificate is a requirement. In addition, the board is working on making the inclusion of license numbers a requirement for advertising.

[3:29:54 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER closed public testimony on SB 228.

[3:30:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE moved to report SB 228 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

CHAIR SUMNER objected.

[3:30:36 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives Carrick, Prax, Saddler, and Ruffridge voted in favor of moving SB 228 out of committee. Representative Sumner voted against it. Therefore, SB 228 was reported out of the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee by a vote of 4-1.

#

[3:31:09 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:31 p.m. to 3:34 p.m.

^#hb298

**HB 298-ALCOHOL WARNING SIGNS ON LIC. PREMISES**

[3:34:27 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 298, "An Act relating to the posting of warning signs for alcoholic beverages." [Before the committee was CSHB 298(HSS).]

[3:34:43 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER opened public testimony on HB 298.

[3:34:51 PM](#)

NOELLE LOCONTE, PhD, Faculty Member, Division of Hematology, Medical Oncology, and Palliative Care, Department of Medicine, University of Wisconsin, testified in support of HB 298. She stated the awareness among Americans and physicians that alcohol is a carcinogen is low. She said the bill would help increase awareness of the connection between alcohol and cancer.

[3:36:12 PM](#)

ROXANNE JONES, Family Physician, Alaska Academy of Family Physicians, testified in support of HB 298. She stated that reminders of healthy behaviors cannot only be done in the doctor's office, adding that individuals spend far more time outside of that setting. She opined that the signage proposed in HB 298 would help. She shared several relevant statistics on alcohol use and the efficacy of signage for public health efforts. She added that as a doctor herself, she was not aware of the extent of the carcinogenic effect of alcohol until this bill was introduced. She reiterated her support for HB 298.

[3:38:53 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER closed public testimony on HB 298 and announced that the bill would be held over.

^#hb277

**HB 277-LICENSING RECIPROCITY; FEES**

[3:39:17 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 277, "An Act relating to occupational licensing; and providing for an effective date." [Before the committee was CSHB 277(W&M).]

[3:39:33 PM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 3:39 p.m.

[3:40:52 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BEN CARPENTER, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, presented CSHB 277(W&M). He paraphrased the sponsor

statement [included in committee packet], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

HB 277 requires occupational licenses to cost no more in Alaska than other states and allows for universal licensing reciprocity with other states. Current law requires licenses to cost no more than the cost to the government of approving such license.

The Institute for Justice identified 64 lower income occupational licenses required by the state of Alaska. The cost of these licenses is higher in Alaska for 42 of the 64 occupations. The Institute for Justice also identified 32 occupational licenses in Alaska that have no licensing requirements in at least 20 other states. HB 277 eliminates licensing, but not regulatory, requirements in Alaska for those professions.

The Alaska Policy Forum reported that Alaska is ranked 24th in the nation for the most burdensome state-level occupational licensing regulation. Overregulating occupations often disincentivizes or prevents people from pursuing an occupation that they may be passionate about and excel at, further robbing Alaska of goods and services and a flourishing economy that could have been enjoyed. Reducing state-level occupational licensure also may be among Alaska's easiest fixes for the issue of overregulation of small businesses.

The Policy Forum reported in 2023 that Alaska's workforce is dwindling for a variety of reasons, and it will take a multi-pronged approach to encourage workers to rejoin the labor force in the state. One thing stopping some from working or transitioning to a different career is undue occupational licensing burdens. While rigorous processes to obtain licenses for some careers—such as doctors, psychotherapists, and surgeons—make sense, there are plenty of jobs that should not have such rigorous licensing requirements. It would benefit Alaska to recognize out-of-state licenses when the holders are in good standing or join interstate licensing compact agreements such as the Nurse Licensure Compact. It could also find ways to cut back on the number of barriers and licenses required to work in Alaska.



Alaska needs workers, and yet the state is keeping individuals from working through burdensome licensing requirements. Alaska can be a thriving state, with strong families and self-sufficient individuals. It is time to make that happen.

[3:42:49 PM](#)

ALASDAIR WHITNEY, Legislative Counsel, Institute for Justice (IJ), gave invited testimony in support of CSHB 277(W&M). He said the IJ encourages the committee to support the bill for two reasons: Firstly, it would significantly reduce licensing barriers in Alaska; secondly, it would help relieve friction in labor markets by recognizing out-of-state licensing. He relayed that 20 states have enacted licensing recognition reform in some capacity. Arizona, for example, enacted one of the broadest laws and is projected to yield a multi-billion dollar increase in the state's gross domestic product (GDP). He encouraged the committee to support the bill.

CHAIR SUMNER sought questions from committee members.

[3:45:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER pointed out that in Alaska, licensing fees fund the investigation of bad actors. He asked whether Mr. Whitney had considered the effect of universal licensure on the revenue stream for Alaska licensing boards.

MR. WHITNEY answered yes, but it's difficult to ascertain the effect because of the bill's standard for establishing fees under a national average. He said his testimony is intended to offer support for the recognition component of the bill and the idea that the bill would make it easier for people who move to Alaska to start working.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the IJ believes that implementing a national standard is a good idea for all professional licensing.

MR. WHITNEY answered no, every state is different. However, the IJ is advocating for ways to make licensure easier.

[3:47:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER stated that the bureaucracy of managing each particular field becomes a burden that's placed on the private sector. He said while he does not support a national standard, he opined that the cost of regulation on the private sector should be considered and discussed to ensure that private sector growth is being encouraged. He reiterated that the bill would be a function to reduce that cost.

CHAIR SUMNER sought further explanation of list of trades in Section 1 that would exclude a person from acting as a fiduciary.

[3:49:45 PM](#)

DONNA ARDUIN, Staff, Representative Ben Carpenter, Alaska State Legislature, acknowledged that the bill is dense and full of conforming language. She noted that the policy changes can be found in Sections 2, 3, 14, and 56.

CHAIR SUMNER questioned what is being changed in section 1.

MS. ARDUIN said Section 1 is conforming language.

CHAIR SUMNER requested an overview of the sectional analysis.

[3:50:59 PM](#)

KENDRA BROUSSARD, Staff, Representative Ben Carpenter, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Carpenter, prime sponsor, paraphrased the sectional analysis for CSHB 277(W&M) [included in committee packet]. [Due to its length, the sectional analysis for CSHB 277(W&M) is provided at the end of the minutes.]

[3:55:24 PM](#)

MS. BROUSSARD directed attention to the PowerPoint presentation on HB 277, entitled "HB 277 An Act Related to Occupational Licensing." She began on slide 2, "Alaska Policy Forum," which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

2021 Mercatus Center report

While regulations and licensures are usually justified as a means of keeping consumers safe, mountains of regulations can easily get out of control, become

counterproductive, contradict each other, and harm the economy.

MS. BROUSSARD continued to slide 3, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Alaska is ranked 24th in the nation for the most burdensome state-level occupational licensing regulation. Overregulating occupations often disincentivizes or prevents people from pursuing an occupation that they may be passionate about and excel at, further robbing Alaska of goods, services, and a flourishing economy that could have been enjoyed. Reducing state-level occupational licensure also may be among Alaska's easiest fixes for the issue of overregulation, since federal regulations are much harder for a state to influence.

[3:56:15 PM](#)

MS. BROUSSARD moved to slide 4, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Alaska's private sector workforce is dwindling for a variety of reasons, and it will take a multi-pronged approach to encourage workers to rejoin the labor force in the state. One thing stopping some from working or transitioning to a different career is undue occupational licensing burdens. While rigorous processes to obtain licenses for some careers—such as doctors, psychotherapists, and surgeons—make sense, there are plenty of jobs that should not have such rigorous licensing requirements.

MS. BROUSSARD turned to slide 5, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

It would benefit Alaska to recognize out-of-state licenses when the holders are in good standing or join interstate licensing compact agreements such as the nurse licensure compact. It could also find ways to cut back on the number of barriers and licenses required to work in Alaska. Alaska needs workers, and yet the state is keeping individuals from working through burdensome licensing requirements. Alaska can be a thriving state, with

strong families and self-sufficient individuals. It is time to make that happen.

MS. BROUSSARD continued to slide 6, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE

The Institute for Justice studied occupational licensing review in 15 states from 1985 to 2017 and found that occupational and professional associations initiated at least 83% of new licenses, concluding that licensing policy is typically driven by special interests, not the public interest. Overwhelmingly, demands come from motivated parties, who may put professional status or economic gain ahead of sound policy. In fact, independent government reviews most often conclude that these demands are wrongheaded.

[3:57:18 PM](#)

MS. BROUSSARD advanced to slide 7, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Institute for justice recommends that government review licensing proposals using criteria such as whether there is proof of harm from an occupation, whether the benefits of licensing would outweigh costs, and whether public safety would be better protected in a less burdensome or restrictive way.

MS. BROUSSARD turned to slide 8, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE BILL

HB 190, The Alaska Sunset Commission Act, passed out of Ways and Means in February and had its first hearing in State Affairs. If the Act becomes law, occupational licensing review will be part of the Commission's purview.

MS. BROUSSARD concluded on slide 9, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

HB 277 will fast-track the economic benefits of such review by immediately allowing universal reciprocity for licenses granted by other states.

HB 277 will immediately remove some of the cost burden for licensees and prospective licensees.

[3:58:45 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER added that this bill embodies the idea of reducing regulation to spur economic growth.

[3:59:39 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER referred to Section 14, paragraph (13), and asked why a new exemption would be added for carpentry, among a number of other trades, would be exempted.

MS. ARDUIN confirmed that the bill would eliminate a handful of professions from the licensing requirement. She explained that the list of trades in paragraph (13) all generally work under a licensed general contractor. She added that the regulatory barriers would not be removed for these professions.

[4:01:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE shared his understanding that most medical licenses already have a reciprocity component and asked whether universal reciprocity is recognized by other professions.

MS. ARDUIN said physicians and other professions with a universal reciprocity component are not the focus of the bill. She clarified that the bill targets lower- and middle-income occupational licenses for which a reduction in fees would relieve a greater burden.

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked whether there is an estimate on the average cost saving that would result from the bill.

MS. ARDUIN said there is an estimate on cost savings from the fee reduction in some of the fiscal notes. She offered to follow up with the requested information specific to every occupation.

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE stated that the licensure fees in other states are a rolling average. He asked whether the Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development (DCCED) would keep a tab on other states' occupational licensing fees and adjust the cap on a regular basis.

[4:07:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER said the department would be able to reference the national average from other organizations, like the IJ, who maintain that data already.

[4:07:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER said he would like to know more about the IJ.

[4:08:27 PM](#)

MR. WHITNEY said the IJ is a non-profit law firm that works to protect civil liberties with the goal of making it easier for Americans to work in their chosen field. He opined that HB 277 would make it easier for people to obtain licenses and get to work.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether the Institute of Justice focuses primarily on occupational licensing issues.

MR. WHITNEY said the IJ engages in litigation efforts across the country to help people fight unjust licensing regimes, in addition to private property, First Amendment, and educational choice issues.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether any other states base their licensing fees on a national average.

MR. WHITNEY answered no; however, Alaska ranks in the top twenty with regard to fee "burden." He reported that the average fees in Alaska range from \$200-\$400 as of 2022 with some costing as low as \$100 and others costing up to \$700. He said the institute has not seen another state with this proposed fee structure.

[4:15:01 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER asked whether the bill would apply to attorneys.

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER clarified that an attorney's license is a professional license, not occupational. He said the bill would only apply to occupational licenses.

[4:15:22 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked whether the sponsor had given any thought to potential occupations that may benefit from "separate details."

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER said licenses are supposed to be proof of capability; however, that is not always the case. He said the concern is that the certification has no bearing on whether the private sector will reward the licensee for doing the job.

CHAIR SUMNER contended that licenses are less of a fitness check and more of a confirmation of bonding and insurance.

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER responded that the employer has the ultimate responsibility of ensuring that workers are bonded and insured.

[4:19:16 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER questioned the difference between occupational and professional licenses.

SYLVAN ROBB, Director, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development (DCCED), said in the division does not distinguish between professional and occupational licenses.

[4:20:25 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked whether the bill would create the need to establish a regulation framework to establish reciprocity.

MS. ROBB opined that there would need to be a regulatory project for many professions because of the great number of statutes the bill deletes. In addition, the bill is problematic because it deletes the statutory authority that allows for licensing by credential, (indisc.), or reciprocity, depending on the profession, and fails to include a reference the new reciprocity section. She said the division is concerned about the bill's impact and referred to Section 33, for example, which may result in midwives whose licenses never expire under the reciprocity of the bill.

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked whether each board would need to go back and draft its regulations to comply with the new reciprocity language.

MS. ROBB answered yes, because the current statutory authority that allows certain professions to obtain a license through reciprocity would be deleted [if the bill were to pass] and does not point to the new reciprocity that exists in Section 3.

[4:25:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX said he supports the concept and can't find any downside. He asked whether there are occupations specific to Alaska that would necessitate specific licensing requirements.

MS. ROBB reiterated that the department has concerns with the bill. She agree with the intention of helping people get to work faster, reducing licensing fees, and minimizing the regulatory burden; however, she opined that these goals would be better accomplished through other existing legislation, such as HB 85 and HB 314. She expressed concern about the unqualified reciprocity in the bill in addition to the inclusion of certain professions that are typically excluded from reciprocity, such as game guides and marine pilots, as those jobs require knowledge specific to Alaska.

[4:29:42 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER inquired as to the elements of licensing fees in Alaska.

MS. ROBB reported that the formula for licensing fees is specified in AS 08.01.065, which requires that the fees cover the cost of regulating the profession.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked whether any other states base their licensing fees on a national average.

MS. ROBB said she is not familiar with any entity that sets its fees based on a national average.

[4:32:15 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER asked whether the bill would impact licensing for residential home builders, as that profession may require knowledge specific to Alaska.

MS. ROBB said the bill would remove licensing requirements for a number of specialty contractors; however, residential contractors would not be impacted by the bill with the exception



that their fees may either decrease or increase due to the increased administrative burden.

CHAIR SUMNER sought to confirm that the bill would not create reciprocity for residential builders.

MS. ROBB clarified that the bill would [create reciprocity for residential builders].

[4:33:56 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX inquired as to the difference between hiring an Alaskan contractor for residential work and a contractor from the Lower-48 and whether it's a licensing issue or an experience issue.

CHAIR SUMNER said possibly both. He surmised that the length of the license could be an indicator of Alaska-specific knowledge.

MS. ROBB confirmed that of the construction contract workers, residential contractors are the only ones required to pass an exam.

[4:35:48 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE asked whether a person entering into a licensing compact would be required to pay a fee toward the state.

MS. ROBB said there's not a "one size fits all" structure for compacts, as Alaska is not currently a member of any professional licensing compact.

[4:37:53 PM](#)

CHAIR SUMNER announced that HB 277 would be held over.

#

[4:38:15 PM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Sectional analysis for CSHB 277 (W&M):

## Sections in HB 277

Includes a great deal of conforming language for the universal reciprocity language in the bill and for fee caps in the bill.

### Section 1

Amends the Alaska trust company act exemptions to add conforming language for fiduciaries.

### Section 2

Amends the centralized licensing statute (AS 08.01) to limit total fees collected by the state for occupational licenses to the total national average fees for each occupation.

### Section 3

Adds a new section to the centralized licensing statute (AS 08.01) to require departments and appropriate boards to issue licenses to an applicant for a license which the applicant holds a comparable license in another jurisdiction. The applicant must hold a current license in another state, district, or territory of the United States and has actively used the license during the past two years. Fingerprint and criminal history checks or waiver of confidentiality will be required if required for a license in Alaska. Applicants must be in good standing in their existing license issuing jurisdiction.

Exceptions to this requirement are for real estate appraisers, big game transporters, and animal control agencies who have federal requirements, and for general business licenses.

### Section 4

Amends the telehealth statute to add conforming language for eliminating the licensing requirement for dispensing opticians.

### Section 5

Amends the public account statute to add conforming language.

### Section 6

Amends the general provisions of the centralized licensing statutes to conform to the definition of license.

Section 7

Conforms the definition of "principal place of business," for accountants.

Section 8

Conforming language for acupuncture and oriental medicine.

Section 9

Amends the construction contractors to exempt from licensing requirements contractors who only perform contract work related to carpentry, cabinet making, cement finishing, door repair, drywall installation, floor sanding, glazing, insulation, iron and steel, masonry, painting, paving, pipelaying, sheet metal, or terrazzo.

Section 10

Amends definitions to remove sheet metal from mechanical contractors.

Section 11

Amends licensing and regulation fees to add conforming language for chiropractors.

Section 12

Amends publication of applicable law to remove reference to licensing of collection agencies.

Section 13

Amends the license required statute to remove collection agencies from required licensure.

Section 14

Amends annual statement of collection to remove licensing requirements for collection agencies.

Section 15

Adds conforming language to information confidential statute for collections agencies to remove ability to revoke a license.

Section 16

Adds conforming language to investigations of collection agencies to remove licensing reference.

Section 17

Adds conforming language to maintaining actions or suits on behalf of a collection agency client to remove reference to licensing.

Section 18

Adds conforming language to duty to maintain public office for collection agencies to remove reference to licensing.

Section 19

Adds conforming language for collection agency operations.

Section 20

Adds conforming language to form submission requirements for collection agencies.

Section 21

Changes the definition of collection agency from "licensed" to "engaging in the collection agency business."

Section 22

Conforming language for collection agencies.

Section 23

Amends dental hygienist language to conform to universal reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 24

Amends dentistry statute to require an applicant for a specialist license to meet the requirements of the profession but not current licensure statutes, to conform with reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 25

Amends architects, engineers, land surveyors, and landscape architects to remove board requirement to approve comity of applications to conform with reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 26

Removes comity provision for registration of professional architects, professional engineers, land surveyors, of landscape architects to conform with reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 27

Amends fees for medical professionals to eliminate license by endorsement to conform with universal reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 28

Amends midwives' statute to eliminate reference to licensure by credentials to conform with reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 29

Amends optometrist statute to remove reference to licensing for dispensing opticians.

Section 30

Amends board of pharmacy statute to remove reference to dispensing opticians' licensure.

Section 31

Amends pharmacists and pharmacies to remove license by transfer to conform to universal reciprocity in this bill.

Section 32

Adds conforming language to dispensing opticians.

Section 33

Amends physical therapists and occupational therapists to conform with reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 34

Adds conforming language to temporary permits for physical and occupational therapists to conform with reciprocity language in this bill.

Section 35

Adds conforming language to temporary permits for social work practice.

Section 36

Amends definition of health care provider to eliminate dispensing optician.

Section 37

Adds to criminal justice background requirements for applicators of pesticides and broadcast chemicals if required by the department.

Section 38

Amends license, tags, and subsistence permits statute to removes reference to licensure for taxidermy and control of nuisance wild birds and nuisance wild small mammals.

Section 39

Conforming language for nuisance wild birds and small animals.

Section 40

Amends the licensing statute to limit fees collected by the state for emergency medical practitioners' licenses to the national average fees for those occupations.

Section 41

Adds a new section to the emergency medical practitioners' licensing statute to require department to issue licenses to an applicant for a license which the applicant holds a comparable license in another jurisdiction. The applicant must hold a current license in another state, district, or territory of the United States and has actively used the license during the past two years. Fingerprint and criminal history checks will be required if required for a license. Applicants must be in good standing in their existing license issuing jurisdiction.

Section 42

Amends definition of health care provider to remove reference to dispensing optician licensure.

Section 43

Amends the school bus drivers' licensing statute to require department to issue licenses to an applicant for a license which the applicant holds a comparable license in another jurisdiction. The applicant must hold a current license in another state, district, or territory of the United States and has actively used the license during the past two years.

Section 44

Amends the commercial motor vehicles licensing statute to require department to issue licenses to an applicant for a license which the applicant holds a comparable license in another jurisdiction. The applicant must hold a current license in another state, district, or territory of the United States and has actively used the license during the past two years.

Section 45

Refers to language under Section 46.

Section 46

Adds new language to commercial driver's license statute to limit fees collected by the state for licenses to the national average fees for that occupation.

Section 47

Amends commercial driver's license statutes to reflect universal reciprocity requirements in this bill.

Section 48

Amends the Alaska business and license act to require occupations whose license requirements are being removed to continue to comply with all regulatory provisions for that occupation.

Section 49

Amends the licensing statute to limit fees collected by the state for pesticides and broadcast handlers' licenses to the national average fees for those occupations.

Section 50

Adds a new section to the pesticides and broadcast chemical licensing statute to require department to issue licenses to an applicant for a license which the applicant holds a comparable license in another jurisdiction. The applicant must hold a current license in another state, district, or territory of the United States and has actively used the license during the past two years. Fingerprint and criminal history checks will be required if required for a

license. Applicants must be in good standing in their existing license issuing jurisdiction.

#### Section 51

Repeals subsections of the centralized licensing statute that remove licensing requirements, allow for reciprocity or fees in current statutes that are being superseded in this bill.

License requirements that are repealed in this bill are: dispensing opticians, collection agencies, commercial removal of nuisance wild birds and small animals, taxidermy, and specialty contractors who only perform contract work related to carpentry, cabinet making, cement finishing, door repair, drywall installation, floor sanding, glazing, insulation, iron and steel, masonry, painting, paving, pipelaying, sheet metal, or terrazzo.

Repealed statutes for conforming purposes include: barbering, hairdressers, or aestheticians, behavioral analysts, operator of a collection agency, collection agents, professional counselors, dental hygienists, dentistry, dieticians and nutritionists, medical examiners, morticians, architecture, big game guides, massage therapists, marital and family therapy, physician, osteopath, podiatry, and midwives, motor vehicle dealers, practical nurse applicants, nursing fees, nursing home administrator, dispensing opticians, contact lens dispensers, optometry, pharmacists, physical therapists, phycologists and psychological associates, and veterinary medicine.

#### Section 52

Provides for a transition: on or after July 1, 2025, a person who holds a valid license, certificate, registration, or endorsement by reciprocity, comity, credentials, may continue to practice under the license, permit, registration, of endorsement until it expires normally or is suspended or revoked.

#### Section 53

Provides for an effective date of July 1, 2025.