



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 30, 2020

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Rep. Brostoff Statement on AB 605

“To be frank, this bill is a disgrace.”

MADISON - In response to Assembly Bill 605 passing out of the Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform earlier today, State Representative Jonathan Brostoff (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“To be frank, this bill is a disgrace. At every level of the process, this bill represents a slap in the face to the legislative process and to hardworking Wisconsinites who expect their legislators to work in good faith on their behalf. First, the bill as originally drafted was an absolute mess: the policy prescriptions advanced by the bill were clearly anti-worker and anti-consumer, and the language the bill authors used was vague, subjective, and open to interpretation. And then, somehow, the bill authors managed to one-up themselves by putting forward an amendment that somehow makes the bill *even worse*. The amendment keeps most of the worst parts of the original bill, and then cedes even more control over the legislative process for licensing bills to unelected bureaucrats. Are Republicans really so opposed to doing the job their constituents elected them to do?”

AB 605 would create a “sunrise review” process for new occupational licenses, whereby a state agency would be required to produce a report on any bill that would create a new license. Under the substitute amendment adopted today (and introduced only days before the committee vote, long after the public hearings on the bill), the Legislative Audit Bureau would have up to 270 days to produce a report on various effects that expanding occupational licensing would have on a field. Until that “sunrise report” is completed, the legislature would be barred from taking action on the bill subject to the reporting requirement. In effect, this could result in licensing bills introduced partway through a legislative session “timing out” should the session adjourn before a “sunrise report” is completed. Furthermore, the bill as amended gives the bureaucratic Legislative Audit Bureau the authority recommend inaction on various bills or recommend substantive changes to those bills.

“AB 605 is not the first attempt by anti-consumer Republicans, deregulators, and their dark-money backers to undermine occupational licensing in our state, and it is unlikely to be the last. But I have always and will always stand with Wisconsin’s licensed professionals and consumers in the face of these attacks, and I want to thank the Locksmith Alliance of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the Wisconsin Auctioneers Association, the Wisconsin School Social Workers Association, the Wisconsin Art Therapy Association, and the Wisconsin AFL-CIO for standing up against this bill. Wisconsin’s working professionals are the backbone of our communities, and together we are stronger than these attacks!”

AB 605 is now available to be scheduled for a vote before the full Assembly. Its Senate companion, SB 541, awaits executive action in the Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing, and State-Federal Relations.

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