



INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE

**Institute for Justice's Testimony in Support of SB 22-116**

February 23, 2022

Dear Chairman Rodriguez, Vice Chairman Coleman, and Members of the Senate Business, Labor, and Technology Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 22-116 which would make significant improvements to Colorado's licensing recognition process. My name is Jessica Poitras and I am Legislative Counsel at the Institute for Justice. The Institute for Justice is a national nonprofit organization that advocates for individual rights through litigation and legislative efforts. For nearly 30 years, the Institute for Justice has worked to reform burdensome occupational licensing for individuals across the country.

I encourage this committee to support Senate Bill 22-116 because it is a proven means of reform to help professionals get to work more quickly. Licensed individuals are qualified and have the skills necessary to provide needed services in Colorado. Yet vague license recognition requirements, like provisions that allow for "substantially equivalent" determinations, and new exam requirements are barriers to entry for these individuals. Instead, a person who holds a current, valid license and has work experience should be able to quickly earn an income in Colorado. Senate Bill 22-116 reduces unnecessary barriers to license recognition to do just that.

Additionally, Senate Bill 22-116 will support military families. 35% of military spouses are employed in professions that require a license, but those families are 10x more likely to move across state lines than their civilian counterparts because of the transient nature of military life. Popular careers for military spouses include teaching, nursing, beauty services, and legal services. Those industries need skilled workers and military spouses have the training necessary to fulfill those roles. Yet the cumbersome licensing recognition process they are required to undergo in Colorado prevents them utilizing their skills to address those labor shortages. Senate Bill 22-116 helps reduce barriers that are costly, time-insensitive, and unnecessary.

Senate Bill 22-116 can help skilled professionals get to work faster so that they may continue to support their families, grow their careers, and contribute to their communities. While this bill benefits workers and their families, it also benefits employers and consumers by creating greater access to skilled labor and licensed services. Again, I encourage this committee to support Senate Bill 22-116. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Jessica Poitras  
Legislative Counsel



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