

“Though the stated intent of these laws is public well-being, their effect, and often their stated purpose, is to block competition.”

Fifty-five bills that would free Michigan workers

House bills aim to reform state's heavy licensing laws

By Jarrett Skorup | November 2025

Michigan lawmakers have introduced one of the most ambitious occupational-licensing reform packages in the country — more than 50 bills that would repeal unnecessary licenses, simplify education mandates and make it easier for skilled people to work in our state. The changes in House Bills 4879 through 4934 would make it possible for the state to protect the public without blocking opportunity.

State licensing requirements on workers are often arbitrary. Workers in similar jobs often have to go through widely different steps to get licensed. Training and fee requirements are put into place with little evidence of efficacy. Though the stated intent of these laws is public well-being, their effect, and often their stated purpose, is to block competition.

Licensing has grown far beyond its original intent. Once limited to doctors, lawyers and a few others, it now covers everything from landscapers to barbers

to butter graders to school librarians. Each layer of red tape reduces competition, raises consumer prices, and locks people out of the workforce — especially low-income and rural Michiganders who can't afford time off or tuition for needless credentialing.

The new reform package attacks those barriers head-on.

- Repeal outdated licenses. Bills would end licensing for landscape architects, hearing-aid dealers, floor sanders, school librarians, collection agencies, potato dealers and other occupations that can be safely regulated through ordinary business or consumer-protection laws.
- Streamline requirements. Accountants could qualify with 120 semester hours instead of 150. Barbers would train 1,500 instead of 1,800 hours. Physicians and dentists could complete

continuing education online. Boiler operators, building inspectors, and other trades would see clearer, simpler classifications.

- Increase flexibility. Universal licensing reciprocity ensures that people licensed and in good standing in another state can start working in Michigan without retesting or having to complete duplicative coursework. Remote board meetings and online continuing education options reflect a 21st-century workforce.
- Modernize health care. The package eases licensing for foreign-trained physicians, nurses, and dentists, helping fill shortages across Michigan's hospitals and clinics while maintaining rigorous safety standards.

These changes would deliver many benefits. Job numbers increase when it is easier for people to

enter the workforce. Workers get more opportunities when they don't have to waste time jumping through hoops or taking unnecessary and inefficient training. Consumers see more competition among professions and more choices in contractors. These House licensing-reform bills are truly one of the best regulatory packages ever introduced.

Available online at: www.mackinac.org/v2025-33



Jarrett Skorup is the vice president for marketing and communications at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.