



LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

April 7, 2017

Pedro Nava
Chairman

The Honorable Blanca E. Rubio

Sean Varner
Vice Chairman

State Capitol, Room 5175
Sacramento, CA 95814

Scott Barnett

David Beier

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 827 (Rubio)

Anthony Cannella
Senator

Dear Assemblymember Rubio:

Jack Flanigan

Chad Mayes
Assemblymember

The Little Hoover Commission supports AB 827, the measure you authored that would require the Department of Consumer Affairs to establish a task force to study and report its findings and recommendations regarding the licensing of foreign-trained professionals with the goal of integrating foreign-trained professionals into the state's workforce.

Don Perata

Sebastian Ridley-Thomas
Assemblymember

Richard Roth
Senator

In its October 2016 report, *Jobs for Californians: Strategies to Ease Occupational Licensing Barriers*, the Commission learned that occupational licensing restrictions for foreign-trained professionals create economic inefficiencies. For example, many foreign-trained professionals possess qualifications in the areas in which the state is experiencing, or is projected to experience, worker shortages, such as health care. The Commission learned there are few avenues in many professions for foreign-trained professionals to gain credit for their education and experience, and many must start over in order to practice in California. Witnesses testified at Commission hearings that many foreign-trained professionals end up taking lower-paying jobs as alternatives to the expense of repeating their education and training in California. Consequently, these professionals and their families must live on less money than the market rate for their skill set, the state receives fewer tax dollars and there are fewer lower-skilled jobs available for those with fewer qualifications, while skilled worker shortages persist.

Janna Sidley

Helen Torres

Carole D'Elia
Executive Director

The Commission also learned that foreign-trained professionals often possess language and cultural competencies that enable them to meet the needs of California's diverse population. Witnesses testified that lack of diversity within the health workforce, for example, is a contributing factor to racial and ethnic health disparities.

In light of its findings, the Commission recommended that the state develop pathways to help foreign-trained workers receive credit for the education and experience they already had, and allow them to quickly fill in any gaps between that and justifiable licensing requirements unique to California. As AB 827 would convene stakeholders to create recommendations on integrating foreign-trained professionals into the state's workforce, the Little Hoover Commission supports this measure.

As the bill moves through the legislative process, I will be writing letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If I or the Commission can provide any further assistance, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Carole D'Elia
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission