

Summary of S.233 As Passed by Senate
An act relating to uniform licensing standards

This bill would require the *Office of Professional Regulation*, the *Department of Environment Conservation (for well drillers)*, the *Standards Board for Professional Educators*, the *Electricians' Licensing Board*, the *Board of Medical Practice*, and the *Plumber's Examining Board* to create uniform standards for those professional regulatory entities' licensure processes in regard to the following areas and in a manner that is tailored to each entity's professional regulatory structure:

- ***Military credentials; fees.*** Allowing these entities to evaluate specific military credentials to determine equivalency to the credentials required for Vermont licensure, and requiring them waive application fees to qualified military members and spouses.
- ***Criminal backgrounds.*** Requiring these entities to provide a pre-application determination of an applicant's criminal background (a "second chance" determination request) as it relates to the profession(s) for which the applicant may thereafter seek licensure.
 - An applicant would pay a \$25 fee for a second chance determination request, and this fee would be deducted from the license application fee if the applicant does thereafter seek licensure.
 - The entity's second chance determination is not binding on the entity if the applicant violates probation or parole or is convicted of another crime following that determination.
- ***Sunset review.*** Requiring each entity's professions to conduct a sunset review at least once every five years regarding the profession's continuing education or other continuing competency requirements in order to determine whether any of those requirements should be reduced or otherwise modified.
- ***Endorsement from other states.*** Requiring each entity to have an endorsement process that requires not more than three years of practice in good standing in another U.S. jurisdiction, regardless of whether that jurisdiction has licensing requirements substantially similar to those of this State.
 - Exemptions to this requirement are permitted if three years of practice in another jurisdiction is not adequately protective of the public.
 - Conversely, an entity may waive a profession's practice requirement if an applicant demonstrates that the waiver follows State policy and that the public will be adequately protected.
- ***Foreign credential verification.*** Requiring each entity to have a process to assess the equivalence of an applicant's professional credentials earned outside the U.S. as compared to the requirements for Vermont licensure. The entity may rely on a third-party credential verification service. (This requirement already applies to OPR professions via [3 V.S.A. § 137.](#))