

SUBJECT: Allowing certain licensing authorities to issue digital licenses

COMMITTEE: Licensing & Administrative Procedures — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — K. King, Walle, Goldman, Harless, Hernandez, T. King, Patterson, Shaheen, S. Thompson

0 nays

2 absent — Herrero, Schaefer

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jeff Miller, DocTrace; Annie Spilman, NFIB; Thomas Parkinson)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that digital occupational licenses would be more convenient and readily accessible for license holders and consumers compared to paper licenses, which are currently the only option.

DIGEST: CSHB 2453 could add a new chapter within the Occupations Code that would include definitions and guidelines related to the issuing of digital licenses.

The bill would define "licensing authority" as a state agency, county, or municipality that was authorized to issue an occupational license.

CSHB 2453 would define "occupational license" as a license, certificate, registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by statute ordinance, order, or rule that would have to be obtained by an individual to engage in a particular business, occupation, or profession.

A licensing authority that issued an occupational license could issue a digital license to a license holder. If the licensing authority issued a digital license, the license would have to comply with requirements, including

that:

- the digital license would have to be in a secure format and readily accessible by the license holder through a website and on a wireless communication device;
- the public would have to be able to view a license holder's digital license through a website or by using a QR code; and
- if the authority contracted with a vendor for the issuance of a digital license, the digital license would have to be in a format which the vendor and authority could verify the validity of the license.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.