



PROFESSIONAL  
CERTIFICATION  
COALITION

March 17, 2021

Representative Joshua P. Bryant  
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Senator Bart Hester  
500 Woodlane Street  
State Capitol Building, Suite 350  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
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**Re: H.B. 1553**

Dear Representative Bryant and Senator Hester:

The Professional Certification Coalition (PCC) writes regarding H.B. 1553 and its effect on important protections for the public.

The PCC is a nonprofit association formed to address legislation that affects professional certification programs, those who hold private certification credentials, and the many constituencies that rely on professional certification. The PCC's organizational members include non-governmental professional certification organizations, professional societies, and service providers. The PCC's members reflect a wide spectrum of professions, including health care, engineering, financial services, and information technology, among many others. Our founding organizations – the American Society of Association Executives (the leading organization for association management) and the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (the leading developer of accreditation standards for professional certification programs) – govern the PCC.

Members of the PCC provide certifications that communicate to the public that certified professionals have met established standards for knowledge, skill, and competency in their fields. Private certification is not a substitute for occupational licensure, however, in fields such as health care, safety-related roles, and the engineering and financial industries. For those occupations, regulatory agencies have incorporated the competency standards established by private professional certification programs into licensure requirements and play a critical role in enforcing competency and conduct standards.

H.B. 1553 would grant licensure to an applicant who completes an apprenticeship program in lieu of an educational program. While the PCC supports efforts to open new pathways to professions, in its current form H.B. 1553 could create a loophole for individuals to avoid certification requirements in licensure laws. While apprenticeship can be an alternative to formal education as pathway to a career, licensed professionals who prepare for a career through an apprenticeship should still meet minimum standards of knowledge, skill, and competency. Licensure laws that incorporate private certification requirements provide assurance to the public that all licensed professionals are qualified to practice.

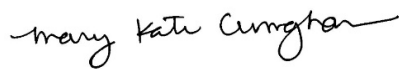
To avoid such a loophole, the PCC requests that the bill be amended to add a new Section 17-4-104(f):

**“Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to require a private certification organization to grant or deny private certification to any individual, nor alter any requirement in a licensure statute or regulation for an individual to hold current private certification as a condition of licensure or renewal of licensure.”**

The PCC supports efforts to remove unnecessary barriers to entry into professions. We respectfully request, however, that you and your colleagues in the legislature amend the bill as we have requested above to maintain important protections for the public.

Thank you for your consideration of these amendments. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to reach out to us using the contact information identified below.

Sincerely,



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CC: Jack Ladyman, *Chair*  
House Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Labor  
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Current List of PCC Members

ABRET Neurodiagnostic  
Credentialing & Accreditation  
(ABRET)

ABSA International: the  
Association for Biosafety and  
Biosecurity (ABSA)

Academy of Nutrition and  
Dietetics (AND)

Academy for Certification of  
Vision Rehabilitation &  
Education Professionals  
(ACVREP)

Alliance of Hazardous Materials  
Professionals

American Association of Post-  
Acute Care Nurses (AAPACN)

American Association of  
Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)

American Association of  
Neuromuscular &  
Electrodiagnostic Medicine  
(AANEM)

American Association of  
Professional Landmen

American Board for  
Certification in Orthotics,  
Prosthetics and Pedorthics  
(ABCOP)

American Board of Certification  
for Gastroenterology Nurses  
(ABCGN)

American Board of  
Neuroscience Nursing (ABNN)

American Board of Post-Acute  
and Long-Term Care Medicine  
(ABPLM)

American Board of Foot and  
Ankle Surgery (ABFAS)

American Board of Wound  
Management (ABWM)

American Industrial Hygiene  
Association (AIHA)

American Medical Certification  
Association (AMCA)

American Nurses Credentialing  
Center (ANCC)

American Payroll Association  
(APA)

American Road &  
Transportation Builders  
Association Foundation  
(ARTBA)

American Society of  
Association Executives (ASAE)

American Society of Civil  
Engineers (ASCE)

American Speech-Language-  
Hearing Association (ASHA)

American Traffic Safety  
Services Association (ATSSA)

American Translators  
Association (ATA)

American Veterinary Medical  
Association (AVMA)

APICS (formerly the American  
Production and Inventory  
Control Society)

Association for Financial  
Counseling & Planning  
Education (AFCPE)

Association for Financial  
Professionals (AFP)

Association of Surgical  
Technologists (AST)

Behavior Analyst Certification  
Board (BACB)

Building Industry Consulting  
Service International (BICSI)

Board of  
Certification/Accreditation  
(BOC)

Board of Certified Safety  
Professionals (BCSP)

Board of Pharmacy Specialties  
(BPS)

Building Commissioning  
Certification Board (BCCB)

CCIM Institute (issues the  
Certified Commercial  
Investment Member  
designation)

CFA Institute

Certification Board for Music  
Therapists (CBMT)

Certification Board of Infection  
Control and Epidemiology  
(CBIC)

Certification Council for  
Professional Dog Trainers

Certified Financial Planner  
Board of Standards (CFP)

Certified Fund Raising  
Executive International (CFRE)

Commercial Real Estate  
Certification Institute

Commission for Case Manager  
Certification (CCMC)

Commission on Nurse  
Certification (CNC)

CompTIA

Community Association  
Institute (CAI)

Construction Management  
Association of America  
(CMAA)

Council of Engineering and  
Scientific Specialty Boards  
(CESB)

Dental Assisting National Board  
(DANB)

Design-Build Institute of  
America (DBIA)

Diving Equipment and  
Marketing Association (DEMA)

Entertainment Services and  
Technology Association (ESTA)

ETA International (ETA)

Events Industry Council (EIC)

Financial Planning Association  
(FPA)

Hearth, Patio, & Barbecue Education Foundation	IT Certification Council (ITCC)	National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)
Heuristic Solutions	Laborers' International Union of North America Training & Education Fund (LIUNA)	National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)
Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC)	Medical-Surgical Nursing Certification Board (MSNCB)	National Restaurant Association (NRA)
Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE)	National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA)	National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA)
Institute of Certified Management Accountants (ICMA)	National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA)	National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE)
Institute of Hazardous Materials Management (IHMM)	National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA)	Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission
Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)	National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification, Inc. (NATA)	Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation
Inteleos (includes the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) and the Alliance for Physician Certification & Advancement (APCA))	National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA)	Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH)
Irrigation Association	National Board of Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS)	Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB)
International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management (IAHCSMM)	National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA)	Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)
International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD)	National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)	PSI Services
International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)	National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM)	Pearson Vue
International Coach Federation (ICF)	National Certification Board for Diabetes Educators (NCBDE)	QualityPro
International Foundation for Retirement Education (InFRE)	National Certification Corporation (NCC)	School Nutrition Association (SNA)
International Society of Automation (ISA)	National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)	SeaCrest Consulting
Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM)	National Commission for Health Education Credentialing	Security Industry Association
International Information System Security Certification Consortium (ISC <sup>2</sup> )		Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE)
		Specialty Pharmacy Certification Board (SPCB)
		Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA)
		Towing and Recovery Association of America, Inc. (TRA)