



HB 5482 / SB 3109

Eligibility for Teacher, Lawyer, Doctor, Nurse, Social Worker, and Other Professional Licenses

The bill declares that all qualified applicants, regardless of immigration status, are eligible for Illinois professional licenses issued by the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (“IDFPR”), the State Board of Education (“ISBE”), and the Board of Admissions to the Bar (“IBAB”).

The bill promotes the health, safety, and welfare of all Illinois residents by ensuring that qualified applicants have a path to professional licensure, which requires them to demonstrate the appropriate skill, education, and experience. The bill covers lawyers, teachers, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physical therapists, social workers, engineers, public accountants, barbers, cosmetologists, and more.

THE BILL:

- States that no person shall be denied a teachers license, attorney license, or a license issued by IDFPR solely based on his or her citizenship or immigration status. Presently, these licenses do not require U.S. citizenship and applicants are not asked about immigration status.
- Removes an inactive section from the Pharmacy Practice Act that requires pharmacist applicants to submit evidence of their immigration status. No other license overseen by IDFPR has this requirement. The section is left over from an old licensing system and IDFPR does not ask or collect information about a pharmacist applicant’s immigration status. Removing the section will not change the licensing process or require new application forms.
- Updates the Attorney Act to provide that no person shall be prohibited from receiving a license solely based on his or her immigration status. The Act was amended in 2015 to explicitly refer to DACA recipients. Because of the recent change to the DACA policy, the Act should be updated to ensure that DACAmented attorneys and law students stay eligible for licensure.
- Allows a person to substitute an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) on an IDFPR license application when the agency requires him or her to provide a social security number. The ITIN can be used to check compliance with taxes, student loans, child support, etc.

THE BILL DOES NOT:

- Change any substantive requirements to obtain a professional license in Illinois. Applicants must meet all qualifications such as education, experience, knowledge, character, etc.
- Create immigration policy at the state level or intrude upon federal law.
- Change a person’s employment eligibility as set by federal law.
- Excuse employers from verifying employment eligibility as required by federal law.