Florida Could Save Taxpayer Money Through Occupational Licensing Reform

Florida ranks 5th nationally for having the most burdensome requirements for occupational licensing.* This means that Florida has, on average, more mandated hours of training, fees, and a greater share of occupations that are regulated.

What barriers do people with past convictions face?

- Lifetime bans and disqualifying periods
- Moral character clause (bestows licensing boards with broad discretionary power to disqualify applicants with criminal pasts based on their moral character)
- Court fines and fees (applicants who are pursuing a license in the financial service industry must pay all related fines, court costs and fees, and court ordered restitution)

What are some reforms that policymakers could undertake?

- Reduce the required training hours for certain occupations
- Eliminate the moral character clause
- Allow for criminal records to be used as grounds for the denial of licensure only if the past conviction is directly related to the profession

What is the cost of recidivism (people being re-arrested)?

In FY 2018-19, the state Department of Corrections (DOC) released 29,242 people, and 6,542 (22%) returned to prison within three years.

If the state had enacted some of the reforms mentioned above, it could have yielded fiscal savings ranging from $60.8 million-$152 million during FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22.**

*Institute for Justice, 2017
**Florida Policy Institute estimate