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Analysis of House Bill 4793 (As Passed House)

Topic: Architecture Registration Examination
Sponsor: Representative Byrum
Co-Sponsors: Representatives Slezak, Walsh, Crawford, Horn, Schmidt, Calley, Denby, Meltzer, Knollenberg, Roy Schmidt, LeBlanc, Miller, Geiss, Bledsoe, Donigan, Bauer, Switalski, Lisa Brown, Polidori, Lahti, Pearce, Rick Jones, Schuitmaker, Meekhof, Moore, Daley, Stamas, Lipton, Segal, and Meadows
Committee: House Regulatory Reform
Senate Economic Development & Regulatory Reform
Date Introduced: April 2, 2009
Date Enrolled:
Date of Analysis: July 22, 2009

Position: The Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth supports the bill.

Problem/Background: The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) has revised its model law to allow flexibility for examination candidates in completing the experience requirement for licensure as an architect. According to an NCARB press release, forty other states have followed suit. Under current Michigan law a graduate with a degree in architecture must complete the experience requirement before taking the Architecture Registration Examination. Michigan is therefore out of sync with most of the nation in the timing of the examination.

Description of Bill: The bill amends Article 20 of the Occupational Code by moving the professional experience and reference requirements from Section 2005 to Section 2004. These requirements thereby become prerequisites for licensure rather than the examination.

Summary of Arguments

Pro: The ideal time for a person to take and pass the rigorous Architecture Registration Examination is immediately after completing school rather than waiting several years until they have completed the experience requirement.

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Graduates of Michigan's four architecture schools are very likely to move to states where they are allowed to test earlier. This represents a significant loss in creativity and energy in the profession of architecture.

Con: The delay imposed by the current structure of Michigan's requirements is not nearly as significant as it has been portrayed. Up to six years of education may be counted toward the experience requirement. Moreover, completion of an Intern Development Program or comparable experience should be helpful to a person sitting for the examination. Individuals delay taking the examination for many reasons that have nothing to do with the timing of the experience requirement.

Fiscal/Economic Impact: The bill will have no impact on state expenditures or revenues.

Other State Departments: No other state departments have shown an interest in this bill.

Any Other Pertinent Information: The American Institute of Architects Michigan Chapter supports the bill.

Administrative Rules Impact: Initially, the Board of Architects had concerns regarding this bill, because it did not address two other issues that the Board believed to be important. These issues were recognition of Canadian architectural degrees and adopting NCARB's Intern Development Program as the experience required by the act. AIA Michigan and the Board Chair have agreed that these two items will be included in the Board's administrative rules.