



City of Houston Testimony Against Senate Bill 1209

Senate State Affairs Committee

April 4, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today against Senate Bill 1209.

As proposed by the bill, an occupational license is defined as a license, permit, registration certificate or other authorization that is issued by a licensing authority and required by an ordinance, rule, regulation, policy or law for an individual to engage in an occupation.

The definition of state licensing authority is also broad in scope. The way “occupational license” and “state licensing authority” are definite it could apply to virtually any business that, for example, needs to register with the Secretary of State for authority to do business in the state. That could broaden the scope of the bill to include the City’s regulated utilities, remaining franchisees among many others. This would significantly affect the overall fiscal impact.

However, Houston does not believe that is the intent of the bill. But as written, it is so broad as to impact solid waste franchises since some of the operators are required to obtain permits from the TCEQ.

This bill could also impact the regulation of the following entities that are licensed at the local level: alternative housing/correction facilities, metal recycling, and precious metals. The committee substitute seems to acknowledge these consequences by specifically addressing credit access businesses.

The loss of local government permitting of the professional services within Houston can directly affect the health and safety of residents. The City of Houston is always sensitive to measures such as this because of lack of zoning in Houston, making the ability for local ordinances and regulation a very need protection for the quality of life for Houston neighborhoods.