

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 293

(Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Labor,  
Licensing and Regulation)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Economic Matters

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State Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects - Applicants for Licensure -  
Educational and Experience Requirements

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This departmental bill alters the educational and experience requirements that must be met by an individual seeking licensure with the State Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in special fund revenues to the State Occupational and Professional Licensing Design Boards' Fund within the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) beginning in FY 2012. Expenditures are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** DLLR has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill establishes four distinct standards that an individual can meet in order to be eligible to take the Landscape Architect Registration Examination (LARE) and become licensed by the board.

*Option 1:* The applicant has (1) graduated from a college or school of landscape architecture that is properly accredited; and (2) at least two years of relevant supervised work experience that satisfies the board.

*Option 2:* The applicant has (1) graduated or completion of a four-year curriculum in a design-related discipline from a properly accredited college or university; and (2) at least four years of relevant supervised work experience that satisfies the board.

*Option 3:* The applicant has (1) graduated or completion of a four-year curriculum in a nondesign-related field from a properly accredited college or university; and (2) at least six years of relevant supervised work experience that satisfies the board.

*Option 4:* The applicant has (1) a high school diploma or equivalent; and (2) at least eight years of relevant supervised work experience that satisfies the board.

**Current Law/Background:** To become a licensed landscape architect in Maryland, an applicant must first meet educational and experience requirements to the satisfaction of the board. An applicant must then pass LARE, a nationally administered examination. The board's examination and qualification processes are facilitated by its membership in the Council of Landscape Architecture Registration Boards (CLARB).

LARE is a uniform national test sanctioned by CLARB and administered nationally on dates established by CLARB. It consists of five sections: (A) project and construction administration; (B) inventory, analysis, and program development; (C) site design; (D) design and construction documentation; and (E) grading, drainage, and stormwater management.

An applicant can qualify to sit for LARE in two ways – the academic option and the nonacademic option. Under the academic option, an applicant must show that they have graduated from an approved college or school of landscape architecture and have practical work experience in landscape architecture that is satisfactory to the board. In addition, the applicant's education and experience must total at least six years. An individual without formal educational training in landscape architecture may apply to take the professional exam under the nonacademic option. Under this option, an applicant must demonstrate that he or she has eight years of practical work experience that is satisfactory to the board. Such experience may be gained by working under a licensed landscape architect, as long as the individual does not have "responsible" charge of the project. The board may also give one year of credit toward the eight-year experience requirement for each year of academic study at an approved college or school of landscape architecture.

The State Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects is one of the five “design boards” within DLLR’s Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing. (The other boards include the State Board for Professional Engineers, the State Board for Professional Land Surveyors, the State Board of Architects, and the State Board of Certified Interior Designers.) DLLR advises that the board considers the current standards by which individuals are deemed qualified for licensure to be unnecessarily limited and not in concert with parallel provisions that exist in statute for other design boards. According to DLLR, the bill’s changes make these provisions similar to analogous provisions that exist for architects, professional engineers, and professional land surveyors.

As of September 2010, about 1,000 landscape architects were licensed by the board.

**State Fiscal Effect:** Under the bill, more individuals seeking licensure may fulfill the board’s qualification standards on an annual basis. Thus, the total number of licensees may increase, which results in an increase in special fund revenues to the State Occupational and Professional Licensing Design Boards’ Fund. In fiscal 2010, 54 individuals attained licensure with the board. Assuming, *for illustrative purposes only*, that the bill results in a 10% increase in new licenses issued by the board, then – based on the board’s current \$68 licensing fee – licensing revenues to the design board fund increase by about \$375 annually beginning in fiscal 2012; the effect may also be delayed to the extent that candidates adjust their educational or work plans to meet any of the new options for licensure.

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### Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 2011  
ncs/mcr

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## ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: State Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects – Applicants for  
Licensure – Educational and Experience Requirements

BILL NUMBER: SB 293

PREPARED BY: Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

### PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL  
BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL  
BUSINESSES

### PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed legislation will have no impact on small business in Maryland.