

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 5

(Chair, Economic Matters Committee)(By Request -  
Departmental - Labor, Licensing and Regulation)

Economic Matters

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State Board of Plumbing - Continuing Professional Competency - Master  
Plumbers and Master Natural Gas Fitters

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This departmental bill requires the State Board of Plumbing to establish, by regulation, continuing professional competency requirements for licensed master plumbers and licensed master natural gas fitters. Licensees must complete eight educational hours as a condition of each license renewal beyond the first. The requirement is phased in for specified licensees whose license expires before October 1, 2017. Prior to proposing regulations, the board must convene a workgroup with interested stakeholders to act in an advisory capacity in the development of provisions regarding subject matter, approved providers, and other issues related to continuing professional competency.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The bill's requirements can be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The State Board of Plumbing is housed within DLLR's Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing. The board has three statutorily established purposes: (1) to protect the integrity of the potable water supply; (2) to provide for the

efficient and safe discharge of storm drainage and sanitary drainage; and (3) to ensure that qualified individuals carry out the board's charge.

Under State law, the board regulates the plumbing industry throughout most of Maryland, but it lacks jurisdiction in Baltimore County as well as in areas of Montgomery and Prince George's counties under the jurisdiction of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. The licenses issued by the board are not valid in these jurisdictions; however, Baltimore County does require applicants for their journey examination to hold a current State apprentice license.

To provide plumbing services or natural gas fitting services throughout most of the State, a person must be licensed by the board. The board issues three different levels of license: master; journey/journeyman; and apprentice. Plumbing licenses are typically held in conjunction with the equivalent natural gas fitters license. Licenses are valid for two years and are issued on a staggered basis.

**Background:** Other boards within DLLR's Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing recently required to establish programs of continuing professional competency include those which regulate professional engineers (2010), home inspectors (2011), architects (2012), and landscape architects (2013). Continuing education requirements for master electricians were also required beginning in 2011. See the **Appendix – Continuing Professional Competency/Continuing Education Requirements** for additional information on occupational and professional licensing education requirements.

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### Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** SB 77 of 2013, a similar bill, passed the Senate but received an unfavorable report from the House Economic Matters Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 20, 2014  
mc/mcr

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**Appendix – Continuing Professional Competency/Continuing Education Requirements  
DLLR Occupational and Licensing Boards and Commissions**

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<u>Board or Commission</u>	<u>Number of Hours or Courses/Frequency</u>
Athletic Commission	N/A
Board of Architects	24 education hours per 2-year renewal
Board of Barbers	N/A
Board of Cosmetologists	N/A
Board of Certified Interior Designers	10 education hours per 2-year renewal
Elevator Safety Review Board	Yes, must be established by regulation; as of December 2013 no related regulations adopted
Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects	24 education hours per each 2-year renewal beyond the first
Board of Foresters	8 education hours per 2-year renewal
Board of Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Contractors	N/A
Home Improvement Commission	N/A
Board of Individual Tax Preparers	16 education hours per 2-year renewal
Board of Master Electricians	10 education hours per 2-year renewal
Board of Pilots	Every 5 years: 5 specified courses
Board of Plumbing	N/A
Board for Professional Land Surveyors	24 education hours per 2-year renewal
Board for Professional Engineers	24 education hours per 2-year renewal
Board of Public Accountancy	80 education hours per 2-year renewal
Real Estate Commission	15 education hours per 2-year renewal for most licensees
Commission of Real Estate Appraisers, Appraisal Management Companies, and Home Inspectors	42 education hours per 3-year renewal for real estate; up to 30 education hours per 2-year renewal for home inspectors
Board of Stationary Engineers	N/A

Source: Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation



ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: State Board of Plumbing – Continuing Professional Competency –  
Master Plumbers and Master Natural Gas Fitters

BILL NUMBER: HB 5

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

CPC course work is a requirement that attaches to the master level license and any choice by a plumbing business to cover course costs would be voluntary on the part of the business and is not an obligation of the business imposed by law.