

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 506

(Delegate Love, *et al.*)

Economic Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs

Business Occupations and Professions - Architects - Continuing Education

This bill modifies the continuing education requirements related to license renewal for architects to reflect biennial renewal. Specifically, the bill requires that a licensee complete 24 continuing education contact hours per 24-month period since the last license renewal, including 16 continuing education contact hours that are related to the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the general public. The bill also alters the process for submitting proof of completion so that licensees submit, only at the request of the board, the original certificate of completion or the transcript of completed courses.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not significantly affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 397 of 2003 requires a licensed architect seeking renewal or reinstatement of a license to complete 12 hours of continuing education credits per year, including 8 hours that relate to the health, safety, and welfare of the general public. If the American Institute of Architects or the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards approve the credits, then the State Board of Architects is required to approve the course. After the original license has been renewed once, a licensee seeking renewal or

reinstatement must submit, with an application and appropriate fee(s), an original certificate of completion verifying the continuing education requirement has been met.

The board may conduct random audits to verify completion of the continuing education requirement. The licensee must retain evidence of compliance with the continuing education requirements for a period of two years. If, upon audit, the board disallows any contact hours, the licensee has a period of six months in which to produce evidence of compliance or to acquire the required contact hours; however, the board may waive these requirements if the licensee shows good cause.

Background: This bill is intended to address concerns that continuing education requirements for architects are not in line with requirements for other professions regulated by the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR), such as real estate brokers, public accountants, foresters, land surveyors, and interior designers. In these professions, the continuing education requirement has to be completed over the course of the licensing period. However, for architects, the requirement is 12 hours per year over the two-year license period. As a result, an architect who completes 11 hours in one year and 13 hours in another year would violate the law. Under the bill, architects would have the entire 24-month licensing period in which to complete the 24-hour continuing education requirement.

DLLR indicates that it has moved to an electronic licensing system that is more efficient and cost effective. Under the new system, “paper” evidence of completion is not required.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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