

SB0496 Business Regulation - Miscellaneous State Business Licenses – Alterations
Finance Committee – February 24, 2022
Sponsor: Senator Pamela Beidle
Position: Favorable

Testimony of Scott Poyer, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Anne Arundel County

Thank you, Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and members of the committee, for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 496. For the record, my name is Scott Poyer, Clerk of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County. My testimony today is on behalf of the Maryland Circuit Court Clerks' Association, which represents the elected Clerks of the Circuit Court in Maryland.

Our Clerk's Association supports SB 496 because it accomplishes several important updates to business licensing. In order to reduce bureaucracy and streamline business licensing, it proposes to repeal four types of licenses, as follows:

The first type of license recommended for repeal is Subtitle 4 – Amusement Devices, otherwise known as pinball and console machines. Decades ago there may have been thousands of pinball machines licensed in the state. In 2021, there were only five licenses in the entire state of Maryland, and these five licenses brought in a total of \$304 to the Maryland Treasury. Repealing this subtitle would reduce bureaucracy and have almost no effect on state revenue.

The second type of license recommended for repeal is Subtitle 7 – Wholesale Farm Machinery Dealers. There were only two licenses issued in the state in 2021, which generated \$254 in licensing revenue for the state. If this subtitle is repealed it will eliminate duplication with the Trader's License, which is required for any business that sells goods in the state.

The third type of license recommended for repeal is Subtitle 15 – Plumbers and Gas Fitters. A total of 324 licenses were issued in 2021, which generated \$6,236 in licensing revenue for the state. Although this license would have a small effect on state revenue, it is recommended for repeal to eliminate the double regulation of plumbers and gas fitters. Currently, Plumbers and Gas Fitters appear to be the only profession in the state who are required to obtain a professional license, issued under Business Occupations and Professions Title 12, and simultaneously under Business Regulation Title 17. Repealing Subtitle 15 of Title 17 would still require plumbers to obtain a professional license, but plumbing businesses would no longer be required to pay between \$5 and \$40 a year to also obtain a plumbers and gas fitters business license.

The fourth type of license recommended for repeal is Subtitle 20 – Trading Stamp Issuers. You, your parents, or your grandparents may remember these as companies like S&H Green Stamps where grocery stores gave out stamps when you paid for your groceries. The stamps could be collected in a book which you could then be traded in for prizes. No Trading Stamp licenses were issued in 2021 and no revenue was generated. Also there appears to be no record of any of these licenses being issued in at least the last 30 years, and probably longer.

Our Association hopes you will give a favorable report on SB 496, and we would like to thank Senator Beidle for sponsoring this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and I am available if you have any questions.