

Licensing Standards Must Be Maintained Despite Workforce Shortages

Nationwide workforce shortages are hitting all corners of our society, from retail to education to government administration. In response, some occupations are relaxing hiring criteria and eliminating degree requirements to help fill vacant jobs.

But this approach doesn't work for highly technical professions that require rigorous qualifications to ensure public safety.

Rigorous licensing standards – including education, examination, and practical experience – are essential for these professions to ensure that professionals are qualified to perform their work safely. This is absolutely crucial for ARPL professions: architects, landscape architects, engineers, surveyors, and CPAs.

The public agrees. A recent survey of 1,200 U.S. voters reveals:



Strong endorsement of rigorous professional qualifications for these professions



Concern over the risks of weakening licensing to address workforce shortages



Support for alternative paths to licensure, *not* lowering licensing standards

Verified Qualifications Matter

Voters strongly support professional licensing for high-impact professions, and they recognize that the qualifications and oversight licensing ensures are essential for public and consumer safety.



75% of voters agree that licensing is critical for guaranteeing professional qualifications.



72% of voters say that licensing keeps the public safe.



Over 83% of voters believe it is critical for **professionals in ARPL fields** to meet rigorous standards, with **more than 45%** considering it ***extremely important***.

"I work with engineers all the time, structural engineers specifically. They need to be licensed and know what they're doing." – Registered Voter, 60

Lowering Standards Creates More Risks Than Benefits



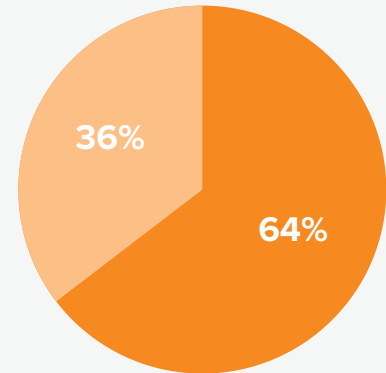
Only 1 in 3 voters

would consider supporting changes to licensing standards in an effort to address workforce shortages.

The majority of voters are highly skeptical of lowering standards for high-impact professions. Here's why:

A 64% are outright opposed and believe that lowering licensing standards would fail to solve workforce shortages and increase the risk of licensing under qualified professionals.

B 36% believe that while changing licensing standards might help fill short-term talent gaps, lowering standards would endanger the public and erode public trust long-term.



“Lowering standards is definitely not the answer to workforce shortages. We will pay the price for that. You need to have the skills to do the job.” – Registered Voter, 57

Balancing Accessibility and Rigor in Licensing

A resounding 86% of voters believe that rigorous standards – examination, education, and practical experience – are essential. Importantly, while they don't support “lowering the bar,” voters do support measures that would make meeting these standards more achievable for aspiring professionals.

79% Voters support **expanding “earn-and-learn” models** that allow students to make money while accruing the practical experience required for licensure.

76% Voters support **integrating highly technical professions into STEM curricula** to introduce more students to these career paths at younger ages.

70% Voters support **providing ESL accommodations** and offering discounted or free practice tests.

“Increasing the paths to get your license while maintaining high standards is the way to go. Earn-and-learn is a great idea.” – Registered Voter, 46

TL;DR: Voters strongly oppose weakening the rigorous qualifications needed to ensure professionals in high-impact fields can perform their work safely. Instead, they support approaches that maintain rigorous licensing standards while creating more accessible ways for candidates to meet those standards.

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