

1-1 By: Hagenbuch, et al. S.B. No. 2943
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 14, 2025; April 7, 2025, read
 1-3 first time and referred to Committee on State Affairs; May 6, 2025,
 1-4 reported adversely, with favorable Committee Substitute by the
 1-5 following vote: Yeas 10, Nays 1; May 6, 2025, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	X			
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			
1-15	X			
1-16	X			
1-17	X			
1-18		X		

1-19 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 2943 By: Hughes

1-20 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
 1-21 AN ACT

1-22 relating to the prohibition of certain actions by a state agency
 1-23 against an applicant for or holder of an occupational license.

1-24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-25 SECTION 1. Chapter 57, Occupations Code, is amended by
 1-26 adding Subchapter D to read as follows:

1-27 SUBCHAPTER D. CERTAIN PROHIBITED RULES, POLICIES, OR ENFORCEMENT
 1-28 ACTIONS

1-29 Sec. 57.151. CERTAIN OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING RULES,
 1-30 POLICIES, OR ENFORCEMENT PROHIBITED. (a) A state agency that
 1-31 issues a license or otherwise regulates a business, occupation, or
 1-32 profession may not adopt any rule, regulation, or policy or impose a
 1-33 penalty that:

1-34 (1) limits an applicant's ability to obtain, maintain,
 1-35 or renew a license based on a sincerely held religious belief of the
 1-36 applicant; or

1-37 (2) burdens an applicant's or a license holder's:
 1-38 (A) free exercise of religion, regardless of
 1-39 whether the burden is the result of a rule generally applicable to
 1-40 all applicants or license holders;

1-41 (B) freedom of speech regarding a sincerely held
 1-42 religious belief; or
 1-43 (C) membership in any religious organization.

1-44 (b) Subsection (a) does not apply to the licensing or
 1-45 regulation of peace officers by the Texas Commission on Law
 1-46 Enforcement.

1-47 (c) Subsection (a) does not prohibit a state agency from
 1-48 taking any action to ensure that the standard of care or practice
 1-49 for the applicable business, occupation, or profession is
 1-50 satisfied.

1-51 (d) This section may not be construed to:

1-52 (1) authorize a license holder to refuse to provide a
 1-53 medical service within the scope of the person's license that is
 1-54 necessary to prevent death or imminent serious bodily injury; or

1-55 (2) limit any right, privilege, or protection granted
 1-56 to any person under the constitution and laws of this state and the
 1-57 United States.

1-58 Sec. 57.152. ADMINISTRATIVE OR JUDICIAL RELIEF. (a) A
 1-59 person may assert that a state agency rule, regulation, or policy or
 1-60 a penalty imposed by the agency violates Section 57.151 as a defense

2-1 in an administrative hearing or as a claim or defense in a judicial
2-2 proceeding under Chapter 37, Civil Practice and Remedies Code,
2-3 except that the person may not assert the violation as a defense to:

2-4 (1) an allegation of sexual misconduct; or

2-5 (2) prosecution of an offense.

2-6 (b) A person may bring an action for injunctive relief
2-7 against a violation of Section 57.151.

2-8 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2-9 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
2-10 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
2-11 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
2-12 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

2-13 * * * * *