

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1880

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**As Passed House:**

January 31, 2024

**Title:** An act relating to architecture licensing examinations.

**Brief Description:** Concerning architecture licensing examinations.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Consumer Protection & Business (originally sponsored by Representatives McClintock, Duerr, Ryu, Leavitt, Waters, Reed, Cheney and Reeves).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Consumer Protection & Business: 1/9/24, 1/12/24 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 1/31/24, 97-0.

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Eliminates the five-year rolling timeline for when architecture applicants must successfully pass each section of their examination for registration.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & BUSINESS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Walen, Chair; Reeves, Vice Chair; Robertson, Ranking Minority Member; McClintock, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chapman, Connors, Corry, Donaghy, Hackney, Sandlin, Santos and Volz.

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

**Background:**

A person must be registered or authorized to practice as an architect in Washington. The

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"practice of architecture" means the rendering of any service or related work requiring architectural education, training, and experience in connection with the art and science of building design for construction of any structure or grouping of structures and the use of space within and surrounding the structures, or the design for construction of alterations or additions to the structures including, but not specifically limited to, predesign services, schematic design, design development, preparation of construction contract documents, and administration of the construction contract.

The Washington State Board for Architects (Board) is a seven-member board appointed by the Governor that consists of six registered architects with at least eight years of professional or teaching experience and one member of the general public who has never been employed, worked for, or associated with a registered architect. Board members serve six-year terms and are responsible for regulating the practice of architecture in Washington.

To qualify for registration as an architect, an applicant must be of good moral character, be at least 18 years of age, and has to pass the required examination. In addition, the applicant must have either: (1) an accredited architectural degree and completed an approved structured training program; or (2) a high school diploma or equivalent and at least eight years of practical architectural work experience, including the completion of a structured training program under the direct supervision of an architect.

The Board is responsible for determining the scope, content, and grading process of the examination, which must be held at least annually. Applicants who fail to pass any section of the examination are permitted to retake the failed parts. Applicants have five years from the date of the first passed examination section to pass all remaining sections. If the entire examination is not successfully completed within the five years, then any sections passed more than five years prior must be retaken. If an applicant fails to pass all remaining sections within the initial five-year period, the applicant is given a new five-year period from the date of the second oldest passed section. All sections must be passed within a single five-year period for the applicant to have successfully passed the examination.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The five-year rolling timeline for passing sections of the architecture examination is eliminated. Architecture applicants are permitted to retake any failed sections of the examination as prescribed by the Board.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2024.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Industry requested that the five-year rolling time period be removed as it is an arbitrary barrier. Many people have job changes or life events that cause them to not be able to pass each section of the examination within five years. If that is the case, that person may potentially lose their previously passed section and have to recomplete it. This costs time and money. This change makes licensure more equitable, while advancing public health and safety. This change also aligns Washington with national standards.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Stephanie McClintock, prime sponsor; Jared Zurn, National Council of Architectural Registration Boards; Karen DeLucas, Karen DeLucas Architecture; and Neha Goel, American Institute of Architects Washington Council.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.