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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Byron Schlomach  
(405) 646-3272  
[bschlomach@1889institute.org](mailto:bschlomach@1889institute.org)

**1889 INSTITUTE CALLS FOR STATE JOBS AUDIT**

*State job descriptions and educational requirements often do not mix.*

**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK** (March 26, 2019) – The 1889 Institute has published a report entitled “The Need for a Knowledge and Skills Audit of State Government Jobs.” It finds that state job postings often require, or express a preference for, levels of education for applicants that are greater than necessary.

Credential inflation, wherein employers demand credentials and degrees of applicants that require more formal education than is necessary to perform an advertised job, is a problem in the private sector as well as the public sector. Four negative effects of credential inflation are: 1) waste in gaining degrees to obtain jobs, 2) underuse of skills, 3) loss of opportunity for those without college degrees, and 4) higher personnel costs. The effects of credential inflation are especially damaging in the public sector where the cost of inefficiencies can often be passed on to taxpayers.

“In reading the state’s job postings, I can imagine the frustration of some, who have the experience and skills needed for the job described, but not the degree that is unnecessarily required,” said Byron Schlomach, one of the authors of the report and Director of the 1889 Institute.

The credential inflation problem also partly arises from outdated notions of what constitutes an education. Private companies are offering specialized skills training and granting certifications and nano-degrees that are increasingly accepted as valid credentials, especially in the high-tech world.

“Many computer science degree requirements for state agency jobs are unnecessary. In fact, someone with a degree may have a lower level of job specific technical skills than someone with an alternative credential,” said Vance Fried, 1889 Institute Senior Fellow, and professor emeritus at Oklahoma State University. “State jobs need to be evaluated for the skills they actually require, and education requirements attuned to those specific skills,” he said.

In addition to a job and skills audit of state positions, the authors of the 1889 Institute report suggest that job skill requirements be evaluated for how much formal education is needed. Only if more than 60 hours of college education is required should a full degree be even mentioned as a preference.

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**About the 1889 Institute**

The 1889 Institute is an Oklahoma think tank committed to independent, principled state policy fostering limited and responsible government, free enterprise and a robust civil society. The publication, “The Need for a Knowledge and Skills Audit of State Government Jobs” can be found on the nonprofit’s website at <http://www.1889institute.org/fiscal-policy>.