

# 1889 INSTITUTE

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## **TIME TO STOP LICENSING POLYGRAPH EXAMINERS**

*23 states do not license polygraph examiners*

**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK** (July 24, 2019) – The 1889 Institute, an Oklahoma state policy think tank, has published “Polygraph Examiner Licensure in Oklahoma,” which calls for allowing the Oklahoma Polygraph Examiners Board to expire on its sunset date of July 1, 2020. The public health and welfare is not enhanced by polygraph examiner licensing, making it clear that, like most occupational licensing, its main purpose is to protect those licensed from competition.

This short report is the latest installment in the 1889 Institute’s Licensing Directory for Oklahoma.

“Polygraph examiner licensing in Oklahoma requires a college degree, but the degree does not have to be related to the job at all,” said Luke Tucker, author of the report and currently a graduate intern at the 1889 Institute. “What’s more,” he said, “while polygraph examining could be learned through an apprenticeship, state law requires applicants to complete an accredited polygraph program, with the nearest option in San Antonio.”

It’s not as if polygraph examining is actually much of a science. Federal law prohibits polygraphs from being used in hiring decisions. This is partly because, as the U.S. Supreme Court has put it, polygraph testing’s accuracy rate is “little better than could be obtained by the toss of a coin.”

“Polygraph examiner licensing is just one more way Oklahoma’s legislature has unjustifiably erected impediments to opportunity,” said Byron Schlomach, Director of the 1889 Institute. “We have so far identified a number of occupations in Oklahoma that are similarly unjustifiably licensed, including funeral directors and embalmers, electrologists, cosmetology/barbering, pedorthists, social workers, locksmiths, and massage therapists,” he said.

Schlomach pointed out that even with the creation of an Occupational Licensing Advisory Commission, there has been little action from the legislature to rein in occupational licensing.

The 1889 Institute has produced several longer publications regarding occupational licensing, including “The Need to Review and Reform Occupational Licensing in Oklahoma,” “Policy Maker’s Guide to Evaluating Proposed and Existing Occupational Licensing Laws,” and “A Win-Win for Consumers and Professionals Alike: An Alternative to Occupational Licensing.”

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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, “Polygraph Examiner Licensure in Oklahoma” and other reports on licensing can be found on the nonprofit’s website at <http://www.1889institute.org/licensing>.