

# 1889 INSTITUTE

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**1889 INSTITUTE, GOLDWATER INSTITUTE JOINTLY PUBLISH PAPER**

*There's a better way to ensure occupational quality—without relying on the government.*

**OKLAHOMA CITY** (November 15, 2018) – Today, the government plays the role of granting occupational licenses to professionals, supposedly to protect consumers and ensure quality services. But as a new paper jointly published by the Goldwater Institute (Phoenix, AZ) and the 1889 Institute shows, there's a better, modern alternative to the government-run system that benefits consumers and professionals alike.

In their new report, *A Win-Win for Consumers and Professionals Alike: An Alternative to Occupational Licensing*, Byron Schlomach, director of the Oklahoma-based 1889 Institute, and the Goldwater Institute's Christina Sandefur and Dr. Murray Feldstein explain that private certification would produce information benefits for consumers and service providers without the existing government monopoly on licensing.

“If you've ever used Yelp to find a good restaurant, or Angie's List to find a good plumber, then you know how important it can be to get accurate information about sellers and products. Occupational licensing is supposed to provide that—a confirmation that the seller will provide a reliable product or service—but that often doesn't happen without other costs, like reduced supply, higher prices, and compromised quality,” Schlomach said.

The paper proposes private certification as an alternate solution to government licensing. Private certification provides the best of all worlds: It protects consumers from fraud, encourages the creation of reliable sources of shorthand information to help both professionals and consumers, and it gives privately certified sellers the incentive to keep their quality high in order to keep their certification credible.

A model bill included in the paper offers a voluntary system to complement the existing traditional occupational licensing process. It would allow private certifying organizations to register with the state, privately certify individuals to practice an occupation according to the organization's practices, and employ modern technology, including consumer-rating systems using smartphone applications, to protect consumers. Such a system would create an element of competition, allowing certifying organizations to vie to provide the highest-quality credential.

The paper can be found at: <http://www.1889institute.org/licensing.html> and at

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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. For more about the 1889 Institute, see [www.1889institute.org](http://www.1889institute.org). For more about the Goldwater Institute, see [www.Goldwaterinstitute.org](http://www.Goldwaterinstitute.org).