



December 1, 2020

Dear Governors Reynolds and Ricketts; Members of the Iowa General Assembly and the Nebraska Legislature,

Thanks to your leadership, our states appear to be weathering the economic challenges associated with the pandemic relatively well. In the past three years, both of our states have enacted occupational licensing reforms designed to change the paradigm of job licensing and open our states up to even more growth.

Nebraska's LB299, passed in 2018, was a landmark piece of legislation that led the way for licensing review efforts around the country, and promises to bring greater transparency and accountability to occupational licensing systems.

This year, Iowa took a big step forward in drawing new workers to the state through House File 2627, a universal recognition bill which helps to welcome those with licenses in their occupation in one state to be easily licensed in Iowa, without jumping through additional hoops. It acknowledges that workers don't lose their skills just because they cross state lines.

Occupational licensing reform can take on many forms, but review and recognition bills perhaps mark the most significant changes—assuring both accountability for licensing that exists, and that workers have portability for their skills. These policies can be especially valuable as more Americans with family members in licensed occupations consider relocation as part of the remote workforce.

In 2021, Iowa and Nebraska have the opportunity to make history, and be the first states to enact both of these reforms. Though our two states are often considered rivals, Iowa and Nebraska would both benefit if state leaders took a page from each other's playbooks, enacting universal recognition in Nebraska, and regular licensing reviews in Iowa.

Nebraskans and Iowans have much in common. Many of our friends and family live or work in each other's states. Policies that create a stronger economic climate on one side of the Missouri River make a positive impact on the other.

We encourage you to plan now to help bring more people and more jobs to both of our states; to reduce barriers to employment; to increase transparency and accountability. There is no better time than now to enact these policies which will contribute to our post-COVID economic recovery.

Our organizations will be promoting this cause in our respective states, and partnering together to help move legislation. Please let us know how we can help you to help our states grow!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Vokal".

Jim Vokal
Chief Executive Officer, Platte Institute

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Ingstad".

Chris Ingstad
President, Iowans for Tax Relief