



**Testimony for March 18, 2024 Public Hearing, House Professional Licensure Committee  
Submitted by Mid-Atlantic Association of Career Schools**

Good morning Chairman Burns, Chairman Metzgar, and Members of the Professional Licensure Committee. My name is Aaron Shenck and I am the Executive Director of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Career Schools/MAACS ([www.maacs.us](http://www.maacs.us)), which represents over 100 technical colleges and postsecondary career schools in Pennsylvania. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on House Bill 1364, which would provide state licensing boards the ability to issue Non-Binding Advisory Opinions on questions from licensees. MAACS supports House Bill 1364, and believes this legislation is long overdue.

Approximately half of our member schools offer various programs that educate students into career fields requiring state professional licensure upon graduation. Over my 10 years with MAACS, myself, our member schools, and licensed graduates have been to countless meetings of different state licensing boards. There have been many times, licensees or schools have asked questions on whether a certain action is permitted by their respective licensing board. These questions have almost always been answered by the licensing board saying they "cannot provide legal guidance," or a similar response. This means licensees who are looking for guidance from the state to make sure they are in compliance and taking actions pursuant to state law and policy, are not provided this guidance in many cases.

Although I can understand reasons why the state may not want to provide direct legal counsel to licensees on some issues, it is not however beneficial for the state to not provide licensees more guidance when they are trying to make sure they are complying with state law. Furthermore, by not providing more guidance to licensees, this is counterproductive to the consumers and public. Consumer protection is one of the primary reasons the state has professional licenses in some career fields, so its imperative the licensing boards have the legal authority to provide as much guidance as possible. House Bill 1364 provides a good balance to address this problem. If passed, the state could provide Advisory Opinions to licensees with questions, but it would not be binding legal advice. This balance provides the ability to provide licensees more guidance, but without the state providing direct counsel.

We respectfully request the House Professional Licensure Committee pass HB 1364. If this legislation is enacted into law, it would increase consumer protections, help licensees avoid fines or other actions, and deliver a more efficient licensure process. Thank you for your consideration of this request.