

HB 1609 is a great bill that meets a growing need for careers to offer a fast track approach to various occupations that are in demand but are presented with current hinderances and shortages, especially in rural areas. This will also provide affordable options that one may otherwise be unable to retain when left to traditional options of law firms only.

HB1609 creates an avenue for the supreme court, in cooperation with the state board of law examiners, to structure and implement an apprenticeship program that creates an avenue for experienced individuals to sit for the bar exam without attending law school. The requirements that would constitute the equivalence of that degree are being a legislator for 4 years minimum, or a 4 year degree with 2000 hours of work under the supervision of a licensed attorney all to be complete within a 5 year span. Upon meeting the requirements an interested individual would submit an affidavit from their supervising attorney stating those hours are complete and all the qualifications are met. The supreme court will review the applicant's requirements and from there will authorize the issuance of certification to take the bar exam.

This again is a simple bill, it's cutting edge for our time, and very appropriate to meet the growing need in high demand careers. This is a good bill and I ask the committee to support HB 1609