

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Rules

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BILL: CS/CS/SB 1570

INTRODUCER: Rules Committee; Regulated Industries Committee and Senator Hooper and others

SUBJECT: Local Occupational Licensing

DATE: April 20, 2023

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Kraemer</u>	<u>Imhof</u>	<u>RI</u>	<b>Fav/CS</b>
2.	<u>Kraemer</u>	<u>Twogood</u>	<u>RC</u>	<b>Fav/CS</b>

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/CS/SB 1570 amends s. 163.211, F.S., relating to the preemption of occupational licensing to the state, to extend by one year, to July 1, 2024, the date that local governments may require and issue local occupation licenses, but only if such licensing was imposed by the local government before January 1, 2021.

The bill requires the Construction Industry Licensing Board (CILB) in the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) to establish, by July 1, 2024, certified specialty contractor categories for voluntary licensing specified in the bill.

Under the bill, for specified job scopes exempted from local licensing in current law, local governments are prohibited from requiring state or local licenses for work that is covered by state licensing, and from requiring a building permit for such work, unless a permit for the work is required by the Florida Building Code.

As to job scopes exempted from local occupational licensing in current law, the bill modifies the job scope of “interior remodeling,” to “interior remodeling if the work does not include structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, or other systems affecting health and safety,” and adds the job scope of “pressure washing.”

The bill authorizes a county that includes an area of critical state concern pursuant to s. 380.05, F.S., to offer a license for any job scope that requires a construction contracting license, if the county imposed such a licensing requirement before January 1, 2021.

The bill provides that a local government may not require a license in order to submit a bid for public works projects, if the work to be performed does not require a construction contracting license mandated by part I of ch. 489, F.S., related to construction contracting.

The bill revises the title of the bill to “Local Occupational Licensing.”

The bill impacts state government. See Section V, Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill is effective upon becoming a law.

## II. Present Situation:

### Local Government Authority

The Florida Constitution grants local governments broad home rule authority. Specifically, non-charter county governments may exercise those powers of self-government that are provided by general or special law.<sup>1</sup> Counties operating under a county charter have all powers of local self-government not inconsistent with general law or special law approved by the vote of the electors.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, municipalities have the governmental, corporate, and proprietary powers that enable them to conduct municipal government, perform their functions and provide services, and exercise any power for municipal purposes, except as otherwise provided by law.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike counties or municipalities, independent special districts do not possess home rule power. Therefore, the powers possessed by independent special districts are those expressly provided by, or which can be reasonably implied from, the special district’s charter or general law.<sup>4</sup> Special districts provide specific services in addition to, or in place of, those provided by a municipality or county.<sup>5</sup>

### Revenue Source Authorized in the Florida Constitution<sup>6</sup>

The Florida Constitution limits the ability of local governments to raise revenue for their operations. The Florida Constitution provides:

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<sup>1</sup> FLA. CONST. art. VIII, s. 1(f).

<sup>2</sup> FLA. CONST. art. VIII, s. 1(g).

<sup>3</sup> FLA. CONST. art. VIII, s. 2(b). *See also* s. 166.021(1), F.S.

<sup>4</sup> *See* s. 189.031(3)(b), F.S. *See also State ex rel. City of Gainesville v. St. Johns River Water Mgmt. Dist.*, 408 So.2d 1067, 1068 (Fla. 1<sup>st</sup> DCA 1982).

<sup>5</sup> State Affairs Committee and Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, The Florida House of Representatives, *The Local Government Formation Manual 2018 - 2020*, available at <https://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?PublicationType=Committees&CommitteeId=3025&Session=2019&DocumentType=General%20Publications&FileName=2018-2020%20Local%20Government%20Formation%20Manual%20Final.pdf> (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> *See* Office of Economic and Demographic Research, The Florida Legislature, *2022 Local Government Financial Handbook*, available at <http://www.edr.state.fl.us/Content/local-government/reports/lgfih22.pdf> (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

No tax shall be levied except in pursuance of law. No state ad valorem taxes<sup>7</sup> shall be levied upon real estate or tangible personal property. All other forms of taxation shall be preempted to the state except as provided by general law.<sup>8</sup>

Counties, school districts, and municipalities shall, and special districts may, be authorized by law to levy ad valorem taxes and may be authorized by general law to levy other taxes, for their respective purposes, except ad valorem taxes on intangible personal property and taxes prohibited by this constitution.<sup>9</sup>

However, not all local government revenue sources are taxes requiring general law authorization. When a county or municipal revenue source is imposed by ordinance, the question is whether the charge is a valid assessment or fee. As long as the charge is not deemed a tax, the imposition of the assessment or fee by ordinance is within the constitutional and statutory home rule powers of county and municipal governments. If the charge is not a valid assessment or fee, it is deemed a revenue source requiring general law authorization.

### **Local Government Revenue Sources Based on Home Rule Authority<sup>10</sup>**

Pursuant to home rule authority, counties and municipalities may impose proprietary fees, regulatory fees, and special assessments to pay the cost of providing a facility or service or regulating an activity. Because special districts do not possess home rule powers, they may impose only those taxes, assessments, or fees authorized by special or general law.<sup>11</sup>

### **Preemption**

Local governments have broad authority to legislate on any matter that is not inconsistent with federal or state law. A local government enactment is inconsistent with state law when (1) the Legislature has preempted a particular subject area or (2) the local enactment conflicts with a state statute. Where state preemption applies, it precludes a local government from exercising authority in that particular area.<sup>12</sup>

Florida law recognizes two types of preemption: express and implied. Express preemption requires a specific legislative statement; it cannot be implied or inferred.<sup>13</sup> Express preemption of a field by the Legislature must be accomplished by clear language stating that intent.<sup>14</sup> In cases

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<sup>7</sup> Pursuant to s. 192.001(1), F.S., “ad valorem tax” means a tax based upon the assessed value of property.

<sup>8</sup> FLA. CONST. art. VII, s. 1(a).

<sup>9</sup> FLA. CONST. art. VII, s. 9(a).

<sup>10</sup> See also The Florida Legislature, *2022 Local Government Financial Handbook* *supra* note 7.

<sup>11</sup> See ch. 189, F.S. See also Florida House of Representatives, *2018 - 2020 Local Government Formation Manual*, *supra* note 6, at 70.

<sup>12</sup> See James R. Wolf and Sarah Harley Bolinder, *The Effectiveness of Home Rule: A Preemption and Conflict Analysis*, 83 Fla. B.J. 92 (June 2009) available at <https://www.floridabar.org/the-florida-bar-journal/the-effectiveness-of-home-rule-a-preemption-and-conflict-analysis/> (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

<sup>13</sup> See *City of Hollywood v. Mulligan*, 934 So.2d 1238, 1243 (Fla. 2006); *Phantom of Clearwater, Inc. v. Pinellas County*, 894 So.2d 1011, 1018 (Fla. 2d DCA 2005), approved in *Phantom of Brevard, Inc. v. Brevard County*, 3 So.3d 309 (Fla. 2008).

<sup>14</sup> *Mulligan*, 934 So.2d at 1243.

where the Legislature expressly or specifically preempts an area, there is no problem with ascertaining what the Legislature intended.<sup>15</sup>

In cases determining the validity of ordinances enacted in the face of state preemption, the effect has been to find such ordinances null and void.<sup>16</sup> In one case, the court stated that implied preemption “is actually a decision by the courts to create preemption in the absence of an explicit legislative directive.”<sup>17</sup> Preemption of a local government enactment is implied only where the legislative scheme is so pervasive as to evidence an intent to preempt the particular area, and strong public policy reasons exist for finding preemption.<sup>18</sup> Implied preemption is found where the local legislation would present the danger of conflict with the state's pervasive regulatory scheme.<sup>19</sup>

### **State Preemption Relating to Certain Occupational Licensing**

Current law expressly preempts the licensing of occupations to the state and supersedes any local government licensing of occupations, with the exception of local government licensing of occupations authorized by general law or occupational licenses imposed by a local government before January 1, 2021.<sup>20</sup> Local government occupational licensing requirements imposed by that date may not be increased or modified, meaning that local governments are not authorized to increase existing occupational license fees, and the authority of local governments to license occupations and collect license fees expires on July 1, 2023.<sup>21</sup>

Section 489.117(4)(a), F.S., specifically prohibits local governments from requiring a license for a person whose job scope does not substantially correspond to that of a contractor licensed by the Construction Industry Licensing Board (CILB) within the Department of Professional Regulation (DBPR). It specifically precludes local governments from requiring a license for: painting, flooring, cabinetry, interior remodeling, driveway or tennis court installation, handyman services, decorative stone, tile, marble, granite, or terrazzo installation, plastering, stuccoing, caulking, and canvas awning and ornamental iron installation.<sup>22</sup>

Concerns about the impact of current law on consumers and those who hold local licenses have been raised by local building officials and licensing boards, including but not limited to:

- Reduction in protection for consumers against unlicensed activity;
- Reduction in the quality and the standards required to perform contracting work in the state;

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<sup>15</sup> *Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections, Inc. v. Browning*, 28 So.3d 880, 886 (Fla. 2010). Examples of activities “expressly preempted to the state” include: operator use of commercial mobile radio services and electronic communications devices in motor vehicles, s. 316.0075, F.S.; regulation of the use of cameras for enforcing provisions of the Florida Uniform Traffic Control Law, s. 316.0076, F.S.; and the adoption of standards and fines related to specified subject areas under the purview of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, s. 570.07, F.S.

<sup>16</sup> *See, e.g., Nat’l Rifle Ass’n of Am., Inc. v. City of S. Miami*, 812 So.2d 504 (Fla. 3d DCA 2002).

<sup>17</sup> *Phantom of Clearwater, Inc.*, 894 So.2d at 1019.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections, Inc.*, 28 So.3d at 886.

<sup>20</sup> *See* s. 163.211(2), F.S., as enacted by ch. 2021-214, Laws of Fla., popularly known as “HB 735.” This exception for local government licensing expires July 1, 2023.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> *See* s. 489.117(4)(a), F.S.

- Limitation on remedies available to consumers for incomplete or poor work quality performed by unlicensed contractors;
- Competition between formerly locally-licensed contractors and unlicensed contractors working in the same trade, without the same level of training and experience;
- Increased difficulty for the public to distinguish between qualified and unqualified businesses;
- Lack of local licensure causing previously locally-licensed contractors to rely on Division I contractors licensed as general contractors (GC), building contractors (BC), or residential contractors (RC) to pull building permits, with those contractors assuming greater liability with increased insurance coverage required, as building officials continue to require licenses to pull permits;
- Limitation on the ability of local jurisdictions to execute their mission of protecting the public, improving competency levels and providing the public access to skilled, reliable and safe tradesmen by issuing local licenses; and
- Lack of a corresponding (state) job scope for the trades for which local licensing is prohibited.<sup>23</sup>

According to representatives from local government licensing agencies, many individuals and small businesses have faced issues due to local governments advising local licenses would no longer be issued after July 1, 2023. A recurring example was given of locally licensed specialty contractors who need a license to obtain a building permit to conduct their specialty contracting work. Without a local license and because there are very few specialty licenses available at the state level, individuals who have been working with a local license for many years will be unable to continue to obtain permits and will be unable to continue with their specialty contracting businesses.

Representatives from the Building Officials Association of Florida suggested delaying the effective date of the preemption of local licensing until July 1, 2024, to give the DBPR and affected groups time to assess options and identify specific categories of specialty contractors, possibly for state licensure.

### **Professions and Occupations**

General law directs a number of state agencies and licensing boards to regulate certain professions and occupations. For example, the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) currently regulates approximately 26 professions and occupations.<sup>24</sup>

General law determines whether local governments are able to regulate occupations and businesses, and to what degree.<sup>25</sup> If state law preempts regulation for an occupation, then,

<sup>23</sup> See Letter to the Florida Legislature from Construction Industry Licensing Board of Palm Beach County on behalf of said board and the Palm Beach County Building Code Advisory Board (Feb. 28, 2023)(on file with the Senate Committee on Regulated Industries).

<sup>24</sup> See s. 20.165, F.S., and *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2021-2022, for the Division of Certified Public Accounting, Professions, Real Estate, and Regulation*, and the list of professions and occupations at 18, at <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/os/documents/Division%20Annual%20Report%20FY%2021-22.pdf> (last visited Mar. 24 2023).

<sup>25</sup> See FLA. CONST. art. VIII, s. 1(f), art. VIII, s. 2(b), and ss. 125.01(1) and 166.021(1), F.S.

generally, local governments may not regulate that occupation.<sup>26</sup> Florida law currently preempts local regulation with regard to the following:

- Assessing local fees associated with providing proof of licensure as a contractor, or providing, recording, or filing evidence of worker’s compensation insurance coverage by a contractor;<sup>27</sup>
- Assessing local fees and rules regarding low-voltage alarm system projects;<sup>28</sup>
- Smoking;<sup>29</sup>
- Firearms and ammunition;<sup>30</sup>
- Employment benefits;<sup>31</sup>
- Polystyrene products;<sup>32</sup>
- Public lodging establishments and public food service establishments;<sup>33</sup> and
- Disposable plastic bags.<sup>34</sup>

Conversely, Florida law also specifically grants local jurisdictions the right to regulate businesses, occupations, and professions in certain circumstances.<sup>35</sup> Florida law authorizes local regulations relating to:

- Zoning and land use;<sup>36</sup>
- The levy of “reasonable business, professional, and occupational regulatory fees, commensurate with the cost of the regulatory activity, including consumer protection, on such classes of businesses, professions, and occupations, the regulation of which has not been preempted by the state or a county pursuant to a county charter;”<sup>37</sup>
- The levy of local business taxes;<sup>38</sup>
- Building code inspection fees;<sup>39</sup>
- Tattoo establishments;<sup>40</sup>
- Massage practices;<sup>41</sup>
- Child care facilities;<sup>42</sup>
- Taxis and other vehicles for hire;<sup>43</sup>
- Waste and sewage collection;<sup>44</sup> and

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<sup>26</sup> See Wolf and Bolinder, *supra* note 13.

<sup>27</sup> Section 553.80(7)(a)5., F.S.

<sup>28</sup> Section 489.503(14), F.S.

<sup>29</sup> Section 386.209, F.S.

<sup>30</sup> Section 790.33(1), F.S.

<sup>31</sup> Section 218.077, F.S.

<sup>32</sup> Section 500.90, F.S.

<sup>33</sup> Section 509.032(7), F.S.

<sup>34</sup> Section 403.7033, F.S.

<sup>35</sup> See Wolf and Bolinder, *supra* note 13.

<sup>36</sup> See part II, ch. 163, F.S.

<sup>37</sup> Section 166.221, F.S.

<sup>38</sup> Chapter 205, F.S.

<sup>39</sup> Section 166.222, F.S.

<sup>40</sup> Section 381.00791, F.S.

<sup>41</sup> Section 480.052, F.S.

<sup>42</sup> Section 402.306, F.S.

<sup>43</sup> Section 125.01(1)(n), F.S.

<sup>44</sup> Section 125.01(1)(k), F.S.

- Regulation of vaping.<sup>45</sup>

As discussed above in the section titled “State Preemption Relating to Certain Occupational Licensing,” the state has preempted, effective July 1, 2023, certain occupational licensing previously required by local governments.

**Construction Professional Licenses**

Chapter 489, F.S., relates to “contracting,” with part I addressing the licensure and regulation of construction contracting, and part II addressing the licensure and regulation of electrical and alarm system contracting.

***Construction Contracting***

Construction contractors are either certified or registered by the Construction Industry Licensing Board (CILB) housed within the DBPR.<sup>46</sup> The CILB consists of 18 members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.<sup>47</sup> The CILB meets to approve or deny applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to discipline.<sup>48</sup>

“Certified contractors” are individuals who pass the state competency examination and obtain a certificate of competency issued by the DBPR. Certified contractors are able to obtain a certificate of competency for a specific license category and are permitted to practice in that category in any jurisdiction in the state.<sup>49</sup>

“Certified specialty contractors” are contractors whose scope of work is limited to a particular phase of construction, such as drywall or demolition. Certified specialty contractor licenses are created by the CILB through rulemaking. Certified specialty contractors are permitted to practice in any jurisdiction in the state.<sup>50</sup>

“Registered contractors” are individuals who have taken and passed a local competency examination and may practice the specific category of contracting for which he or she is approved, only in the local jurisdiction for which the license is issued.<sup>51</sup>

The following table provides examples of CILB licenses for types of contractors.<sup>52</sup>

Statutory Licenses	Specialty Licenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Conditioning- Classes A, B, and C</li> <li>• Building</li> <li>• General</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drywall</li> <li>• Demolition</li> <li>• Gas Line</li> </ul>

<sup>45</sup> Section 386.209, F.S.

<sup>46</sup> See ss. 489.105, 489.107, and 489.113, F.S.

<sup>47</sup> Section 489.107(1), F.S.

<sup>48</sup> Section 489.107, F.S.

<sup>49</sup> See ss. 489.105(6)-(8) and (11), F.S.

<sup>50</sup> See ss. 489.108, 489.113, 489.117, and 489.131, F.S.

<sup>51</sup> Section 489.117, F.S.

<sup>52</sup> See s. 489.105(a)-(q), F.S., and Fla. Admin. Code R. 61G4-15.015 through 61G4-15.040 (2021).

Statutory Licenses	Specialty Licenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Pollutant Storage Tank Lining Applicator</li> <li>• Mechanical</li> <li>• Plumbing</li> <li>• Pollutant Storage Systems</li> <li>• Pool/Spa- Classes A, B, and C</li> <li>• Precision Tank Tester</li> <li>• Residential</li> <li>• Roofing</li> <li>• Sheet Metal</li> <li>• Solar</li> <li>• Underground Excavation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glass and Glazing</li> <li>• Industrial Facilities</li> <li>• Irrigation</li> <li>• Marine</li> <li>• Residential Pool/Spa Servicing</li> <li>• Solar Water Heating</li> <li>• Structure</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Decking</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Excavation</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Finishes</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Layout</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Piping</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Structural</li> <li>• Swimming Pool Trim</li> <li>• Tower</li> </ul>

Current law provides that local governments may approve or deny applications for licensure as a registered contractor, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to discipline of registered contractors licensed in their jurisdiction.<sup>53</sup>

However, under current law, a local government, as defined in s. 163.211, F.S., may not require a person to obtain a license for a job scope which does not substantially correspond to the job scope of one of the contractor categories defined in s. 489.105(3)(a)-(o) and (q), F.S., or authorized in s. 489.1455(1), F.S. Job scopes for which a local government may not require a license include, but are not limited to, painting; flooring; cabinetry; interior remodeling; driveway or tennis court installation; handyman services; decorative stone, tile, marble, granite, or terrazzo installation; plastering; stuccoing; caulking; and canvas awning and ornamental iron installation.<sup>54</sup>

Further, effective July 1, 2023, local governments are prohibited from issuing and requiring construction licenses that are outside the scope of practice for a certified contractor or certified specialty contractor.<sup>55</sup> Local governments may only collect licensing fees that cover the cost of regulation.<sup>56</sup>

Locally registered contractors who are required to hold a contracting license to practice their profession in accordance with state law must register with the DBPR after obtaining a local license.

<sup>53</sup> Sections 489.117 and 489.131, F.S.

<sup>54</sup> See ch. 2021-214, Laws of Fla. (HB 735) (Reg. Sess. 2021).

<sup>55</sup> *Id.*

<sup>56</sup> See also The Florida Legislature, 2020 *Local Government Financial Handbook* *supra* note 7.

However, persons holding a local construction license whose job scope does not substantially correspond to the job scope of a certified contractor or a certified specialty contractor are not required to register with the DBPR.<sup>57</sup>

### ***Electrical and Alarm System Contracting***

Electrical contractors, alarm system contractors, and electrical specialty contractors are certified or registered under the Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board (ECLB).<sup>58</sup> Certified contractors may practice statewide and are licensed and regulated by ECLB. Registered contractors are licensed and regulated by a local jurisdiction and may only practice within that locality.<sup>59</sup>

Electrical contractors are contractors who have the ability to work on electrical wiring, fixtures, appliances, apparatus, raceways, and conduits which generate, transmit, transform, or utilize electrical energy in any form. The scope of an electrical contractor's license includes alarm system work.<sup>60</sup>

Alarm system contractors are contractors who are able to lay out, fabricate, install, maintain, alter, repair, monitor, inspect, replace, or service alarm systems. An "alarm system" is defined as "any electrical device, signaling device, or combination of electrical devices used to signal or detect a burglary, fire, robbery, or medical emergency."<sup>61</sup>

Electrical certified specialty contractors are contractors whose scope of work is limited to a particular phase of electrical contracting, such as electrical signs. The ECLB creates electrical certified specialty contractor licenses through rulemaking.<sup>62</sup> Certified electrical specialty contractors may practice statewide. The ECLB has created the following certified specialty contractor licenses:

- Lighting Maintenance Specialty Contractor;
- Sign Specialty Electrical Contractor;
- Residential Electrical Contractor;
- Limited Energy Systems Specialty Contractor;
- Utility line electrical contractor; and
- Two-Way Radio Communications Enhancement Systems Contractor.<sup>63</sup>

### ***Contractor Licensing Exemptions; Handyman Exemption***

More than 20 categories of persons are exempt<sup>64</sup> from the contractor licensing requirements of ch. 489, F.S., including work falling under the so-called handyman exemption, meaning the work

<sup>57</sup> Sections 489.105 and 489.117(4), F.S.

<sup>58</sup> See Sections 489.505(3) and 489.507, F.S.

<sup>59</sup> See s. 489.505(16), F.S.

<sup>60</sup> Sections 489.505(12) and 489.537(7), F.S.

<sup>61</sup> Sections 489.505(1) and (2), F.S.

<sup>62</sup> Sections 489.507(3) and 489.511(4), F.S.

<sup>63</sup> Sections 489.505(19) and 489.511(4), F.S.; See Fla. Admin. Code R. 61G6-7.001.

<sup>64</sup> Exemptions provided in s. 489.103, F.S., include: contractors in work on bridges, roads, streets, highways, or railroads, and other services defined by the board and the Florida Department of Transportation; employees of licensed contractors, if acting within the scope of the contractor's license, with that licensee's knowledge; certain employees of federal, state, or local governments or districts (excluding school and university boards), under limited circumstances; certain public utilities, on construction, maintenance, and development work by employees; property owners, when acting as their own contractor

is of a “casual, minor, or inconsequential nature,” and the total contract price for all labor, materials, and all other items is less than \$2,500, subject to certain exceptions.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Contractor Licensing Exemption for Eligible Specialty Contracting Services***

In 2022, an exemption from local and state licensing was established by the Legislature for all persons performing certain specialty contracting services under the supervision of a certified or registered commercial pool/spa contractor, a residential pool/spa contractor, or a swimming pool/spa servicing contractor (a licensed pool contractor).<sup>66</sup> A contractual relationship between the supervising contractor and those performing the specialty contracting services is not required (i.e., the performance of such contracting services is outside the business of contracting and need not be undertaken through a contractor/subcontractor relationship).

The services that may be performed by unlicensed persons under the supervision of a licensed pool contractor include the construction, remodeling, repair, or improvement of swimming pools, hot tubs, spas, and interactive water features, as defined in the Florida Building Code (building code).<sup>67</sup> The exemption is not available for persons required to be certified or registered as contractors for specified trade categories described in s. 489.105(3), F.S.,<sup>68</sup> or those in s. 489.505, F.S., relating to electrical and alarm system contracting.

### **Journeyman Licenses**

A journeyman is a skilled worker in a building trade or craft. There is no state requirement for licensure as a journeyman, but the construction and electrical contractor practice acts account for the fact that counties and municipalities issue journeyman licenses. A person with a journeyman license must always work under the supervision of a licensed contractor, but the state does not

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and providing “direct, onsite supervision” of all work not performed by licensed contractors on one-family or two-family residences, farm outbuildings, or commercial buildings at a cost not exceeding \$75,000; work undertaken on federal property or when federal law supersedes part I of ch. 489, F.S.; registered architects and engineers acting within their licensed practice, including those exempt from such licensing, but not acting as a contractor unless licensed under ch. 489, F.S.; work on one-, two-, or three-family residences constructed or rehabilitated by Habitat for Humanity, International, Inc., or a local affiliate, subject to certain requirements; certain disaster recovery mitigation or other organizations repairing or replacing a one-family, two-family or three-family residence impacted by a disaster, subject to certain requirements; and employees of an apartment community or apartment community management company who make minor repairs to existing electric water heaters, electric heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems, subject to certain requirements. *See* s. 489.103, F.S., for additional exemptions.

<sup>65</sup> *See* s. 489.103(9), F.S., and Fla. Admin. Code R. 61G-12.011(2).

<sup>66</sup> *See* s. 489.117(4)(e), F.S., as enacted by ch. 2022-90, Laws of Florida.

<sup>67</sup> The term “swimming pool” is defined as “[a]ny structure basin, chamber or tank containing an artificial body of water for swimming, diving or recreational bathing located in a residential area serving four or fewer living units having a depth of 2 feet (610mm) or more at any point as defined in Section 515.25, Florida Statutes, or the body of water is a public pool as defined in Section 514.011, Florida Statutes” (italics omitted). *See* ch. 2 of the 2020 Florida Building Code (7th Edition), available at <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/FLBC2020P1/chapter-2-definitions> (last visited Mar. 24, 2023). The current code does not appear to define “interactive water features.” However, the described scope of work for certification as a “swimming pool piping specialty contractor” includes construction of “decorative or interactive water displays or areas.” *See* Fla. Admin. Code R. 61G4-15.032, relating to the certification requirements of swimming pool piping specialty contractors.

<sup>68</sup> *See* ss. 489.105(3)(a) through (i) and (m) through (o), F.S. The specified scopes of work are identified as general contractor, building contractor, residential contractor, sheet metal contractor, roofing contractor, Class A, B, and C air-conditioning contractor, mechanical contractor, plumbing contractor, underground utility and excavation contractor, and solar contractor.

regulate or issue a license to a journeyman.<sup>69</sup>

Counties and municipalities are expressly authorized by s. 489.1455(1), F.S., to issue journeyman licenses in the plumbing, pipe fitting, mechanical, or HVAC trades, as this authority is not preempted to the state. A tradesman may be licensed as a journeyman in one local jurisdiction and work in multiple jurisdictions (license reciprocity) without having to take another examination or pay an additional licensing fee to qualify to work in the other jurisdictions (county or municipality).<sup>70</sup> If eligible for license reciprocity, a journeyman with a valid, active journeyman license issued by a county or municipality in Florida need not take any additional examinations or pay additional license fees and may work in the:

- Plumbing/pipe fitting, mechanical, or HVAC trades;<sup>71</sup> or
- Electrical and alarm system trades.<sup>72</sup>

The statutory criteria for licensure reciprocity between local jurisdictions for journeymen include:<sup>73</sup>

- Scoring at least 75 percent on an approved proctored examination for that construction trade;
- Completing a registered apprenticeship program and demonstrating four years of verifiable practical experience in the particular trade, or alternatively demonstrating six years of such experience in the particular trade;
- Completing coursework approved by the Florida Building Commission specific to the discipline within the required time frame; and
- Not having a license suspended or revoked within the last five years.

A local government may charge up to \$25 as a registration fee for reciprocity.<sup>74</sup>

### **Residency Requirements for Contracting Licenses**

Some local governments have adopted policies to promote the use of local residents for contracting activities within their jurisdictions. For example, it is the policy of Miami-Dade County that, except where federal or state laws or regulations mandate to the contrary, all contractors and subcontractors of any tier performing on a county construction contract must satisfy the requirements of the Miami-Dade County Residents First Training and Employment Program.<sup>75</sup> These requirements include that the contractor will make its best reasonable efforts to promote employment opportunities for local residents and seek to achieve a project goal of having 51 percent of all construction labor hours performed by Miami-Dade County residents.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Sections 489.103, 489.1455, 489.503, and 489.5335, F.S.

<sup>70</sup> Section 489.1455(2), F.S.

<sup>71</sup> Section 489.1455, F.S.

<sup>72</sup> Section 489.5335, F.S.

<sup>73</sup> Sections 489.1455 and 489.5335, F.S.

<sup>74</sup> See ss. 489.1455, F.S. and 489.5335, F.S.

<sup>75</sup> See Code of Miami Dade County Florida, Chapter 2, Article I, Section 2.11.17, available at

[https://library.municode.com/fl/miami\\_-](https://library.municode.com/fl/miami_-)

[dade\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR\\_CH2AD\\_ARTIINGE\\_S2-11.17REFITREMPR](https://library.municode.com/fl/miami_-dade_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH2AD_ARTIINGE_S2-11.17REFITREMPR) (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

<sup>76</sup> *Id.* at paragraph (5)(a)(ii) of Article I, Section 2.11.17.

### **Contractor Grandfathering Provision**

Section 489.118, F.S., authorizes the board to grandfather, or certify registered contractors with valid local licenses, in one of the contractor categories defined in s. 489.105(3)(a)-(p), F.S., in certain circumstances.<sup>77</sup> However, the CILB does not have the authority to “grandfather” a specialty contractor, defined in s. 489.105(3)(q) F.S., who is a “contractor whose scope of work and responsibility is limited to a particular phase of construction.”<sup>78</sup>

### **The Florida Building Code**

The Florida Building Code (building code) is the unified building code applicable to the design, construction, erection, alteration, modification, repair, or demolition of public or private buildings, structures, and facilities in the state.<sup>79</sup> The building code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently throughout the state.<sup>80</sup>

The Florida Building Commission (commission) adopts an updated building code every three years through review of codes published by the International Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association.<sup>81</sup> The current edition of the building code is the seventh edition, which is referred to as the 2020 Florida Building Code.<sup>82</sup>

Chapter 553, part IV, F.S., is known as the “Florida Building Codes Act” (act). The purpose and intent of the act is to provide a mechanism for the uniform adoption, updating, interpretation, and enforcement of a single, unified state building code. The building code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.<sup>83</sup> The building code is adopted, updated, interpreted, and maintained by the commission, and is enforced by authorized state and local government agencies.<sup>84</sup>

The commission was statutorily created to implement the building code. The commission, which is housed within the DBPR, is a 19-member technical body made up of design professionals, contractors, and government experts in various disciplines covered by the building code. The

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<sup>77</sup> The specified scopes of work are identified as general contractor, building contractor, residential contractor, sheet metal contractor, roofing contractor, Class A, B, and C air-conditioning contractor, mechanical contractor, commercial and residential pool/spa contractor, residential pool/spa contractor, swimming pool/spa servicing contractor, plumbing contractor, underground utility and excavation contractor, and solar contractor.

<sup>78</sup> See s. 489.118(1), F.S.

<sup>79</sup> See s. 553.72, F.S. Part IV of ch. 553, F.S., is cited as the “Florida Building Codes Act.” See s. 552.70, F.S., and the Florida Building Code, 7th Edition, (building code) available at [https://www.floridabuilding.org/bc/bc\\_default.aspx](https://www.floridabuilding.org/bc/bc_default.aspx) (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

<sup>80</sup> See s. 553.72(1), F.S.

<sup>81</sup> See s. 553.73(7), F.S., which requires review of the International Building Code, the International Fuel Gas Code, the International Existing Building Code, the International Mechanical Code, the International Plumbing Code, and the International Residential Code, all of which are copyrighted and published by the International Code Council, and the National Electrical Code, which is copyrighted and published by the National Fire Protection Association.

<sup>82</sup> The 2020 Florida Building Code, as updated by the Florida Building Commission on August 9, 2022, has been adopted as the building code for the state. See Fla. Admin. Code R. 61G30-1.001 (amended Jan. 3, 2023).

<sup>83</sup> Section 553.72(1), F.S.

<sup>84</sup> See s. 553.72(3), F.S.

commission reviews International Codes published by the International Code Council,<sup>85</sup> the National Electric Code, and other nationally adopted model codes during its triennial update of the building code.<sup>86</sup>

### **Local Enforcement of the Florida Building Code; Issuance of Building Permits**

It is the intent of the Legislature that local governments have the power to inspect all buildings, structures, and facilities within their jurisdiction in protection of the public's health, safety, and welfare.<sup>87</sup> Every local government must enforce the building code and issue building permits.<sup>88</sup> It is unlawful for a person, firm, or corporation to construct, erect, alter, repair, secure, or demolish any building without first obtaining a permit from the local government enforcing agency or from such persons as may, by resolution or regulation, be directed to issue such permit, upon the payment of reasonable fees as set forth in a schedule of fees adopted by the enforcing agency.<sup>89</sup>

Any construction work that requires a building permit also requires plans and inspections to ensure the work complies with the building code. The building code requires certain building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and gas inspections.<sup>90</sup> Construction work may not be done beyond a certain point until it passes an inspection. Generally speaking, a permit for construction work that passes the required inspections is considered completed or closed.<sup>91</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

CS/CS/SB 1570 amends s. 163.211, F.S., relating to the preemption of occupational licensing to the state, to extend by one year, to July 1, 2024, the date that local governments may require and issue local occupational licenses, but only if such licensing was imposed by the local government before January 1, 2021.

The bill requires the Construction Industry Licensing Board in the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) to establish, by July 1, 2024, certified specialty contractor categories for voluntary licensing for these job scopes:

- Fence installation and erection;
- Marine bulkhead work;
- Marine dock work;
- Marine pile driving;
- Marine seawall work;
- Plaster and lath;

<sup>85</sup> The International Code Council (ICC) is an association that develops model codes and standards used in the design, building, and compliance process to “construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures.” International Code Council, *About the ICC*, available at <https://www.iccsafe.org/about/who-we-are/> (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

<sup>86</sup> Sections 553.73 and 553.74, F.S.

<sup>87</sup> Section 553.72, F.S.

<sup>88</sup> Sections 125.01(1)(bb), 125.56(1), and 553.80(1), F.S.

<sup>89</sup> Sections 125.56(4)(a) and 553.79(1), F.S.

<sup>90</sup> See s. 110 of the building code *supra* note 78.

<sup>91</sup> Doug Wise, *Closing Inactive & Excluded Building Permits*, Palm Beach County Planning, Zoning & Building Department, Building Division, available at: <http://discover.pbcgov.org/pzb/building/BuildingCodes/PBO-126%20%E2%80%93%20Closing%20Inactive%20and%20Excluded%20Building%20Permits.pdf> (last visited Mar. 24, 2023).

- Rooftop painting, coating, and cleaning above three stories;
- Rooftop solar heating installation;
- Structural aluminum or screen enclosures;
- Structural carpentry;
- Structural prestressed, precast concrete work;
- Structural masonry;
- Structural steel work;
- Veneer, including aluminum or vinyl gutters, siding, soffit, or fascia; and
- Window and door installation, including garage door installation and hurricane or windstorm protection.

Under the bill, for specified job scopes exempted from local licensing in current law, local governments are prohibited from requiring state or local licenses for work that is covered by state licensing, and from requiring a building permit for such work, unless a permit for the work is required by the Florida Building Code.

The bill modifies the description of the job scope of “interior remodeling” exempted from local occupational licensing in current law, to “interior remodeling if the work does not include structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, or other systems affecting health and safety,” and adds the job scope of “pressure washing” to the job scopes exempted from local occupational licensing.

The bill authorizes a county that includes an area of critical state concern pursuant to s. 380.05, F.S., to offer a license for any job scope that requires a construction contracting license, if the county imposed such a licensing requirement before January 1, 2021.

The bill provides that a local government may not require a license in order to submit a bid for public works projects, if the work to be performed does not require a construction contracting license mandated by part I of ch. 489, F.S., related to construction contracting.

The bill revises the title of the bill to “Local Occupational Licensing.”

The bill is effective upon becoming a law.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

##### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

##### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

##### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

The date for preemption of local government licensing is extended to July 1, 2024, provided the local government imposed such licensing before January 1, 2021. A person with a local occupational license issued by a local government may be able to maintain such licensing until July 1, 2024.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

Under the bill, the CILB is required to establish, by July 1, 2024, certified specialty contractor categories for voluntary licensing specified in the bill, which will require the use of staff time and resources to accomplish.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 163.211, 489.113, and 489.117.

**IX. Additional Information:****A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)**CS/CS by Rules Committee on April 19, 2023:****The CS:**

- Extends by one year, to July 1, 2024, the date that local governments may require and issue local occupational licenses, but only if such licensing was imposed by the local government before January 1, 2021;

- Requires the Construction Industry Licensing Board to establish, by July 1, 2024, certified specialty contractor categories for voluntary licensing specified in the bill.
- Prohibits, for specified job scopes exempted from local licensing in current law, local governments from requiring state or local licenses for work that is covered by state licensing, and from requiring a building permit for such work, unless a permit for the work is required by the Florida Building Code;
- Modifies the description of job scope of “interior remodeling” exempted from local occupational licensing in current law, to “interior remodeling if the work does not include structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, or other systems affecting health and safety;”
- Adds the job scope of “pressure washing” to the job scopes exempted from local occupational licensing;
- Provides that a county that includes an area of critical state concern may offer a license for any job scope that requires a construction contracting license, if the county imposed such a licensing requirement before January 1, 2021;
- Provides that a local government may not require a license in order to submit a bid for public works projects, if the work to be performed does not require a construction contracting license; and
- Revises the title of the bill to “Local Occupational Licensing.”

**CS by Regulated Industries on March 29, 2023:**

The CS:

- Removes all provisions of the bill amending s. 489.117, F.S., related to local government licensing of specialty contractors for limited job scopes;
- Extends by one year, to July 1, 2024, the date that local governments may require and issue local occupation licenses, but only if such licensing was imposed by the local government before January 1, 2021.

**B. Amendments:**

None.