



FACT SHEET

BRIAN W. JONES
Senator, 38th District



Senate Bill 878 – Increasing Transparency of Licensing Entities

SUMMARY

SB 878 requires all boards and bureaus within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to prominently display on their websites the current average timeframe for processing initial and renewal license applications.

BACKGROUND

Since 2009, DCA has been attempting to replace multiple antiquated standalone IT systems. DCA authorized an online licensing system, known as BreEZe, where applicants may check their license and application status through the board's or bureau's website. The BreEZe project was estimated to cost \$28 million, and was scheduled to be fully operational by June 2014. By 2015, the project was still not fully operational, and costs were estimated to be over \$100 million and rising. Today, six years after DCA's promised date of completion, BreEZe is still not fully implemented. DCA has again requested an additional \$30 million over the next three years for continued support of BreEZe Maintenance and Operations. For the boards and bureaus under DCA that are not using BreEZe, DCA is also requesting \$5.2 million in 2020-21 for a cost-benefit analysis process, known as "business modernization," which will supposedly determine if the board or bureau should transition to BreEZe, or if another technology platform is a better solution to meet business and technology needs. Eleven years and over \$130 million later, licensees are still waiting for the BreEZe system they were promised.

PROBLEM

DCA continues to fail at full implementation of BreEZe, and now explores changing its goal entirely to "business modernization." While DCA is well over its original budget and costs continue to rise with no clear goal ahead, hard-working Californians

are paying the price of unknown processing timeframes and little transparency. It is crucial for licensing entities within DCA to process license applications in a timely manner so individuals can practice their profession and businesses can open their doors without unnecessary delays. While some licensing entities provide applicants with average timeframes for processing their applications or allow applicants to check their application status, this information is not universally accessible for all license types.

SOLUTION

SB 878 will increase transparency by ensuring application processing timeframes are easily available to applicants. This bill will require all boards and bureaus within DCA to prominently display on their respective websites the current timeframe for processing initial and renewal license applications. Because timeframes may vary for individual applications based on circumstances to be considered – such as incomplete application, the need for additional documentation, etc. – SB 878 only requires the *average* timeframe for each license category.

Public access to this information will also hold boards and bureaus accountable for any delays or backlogs. Furthermore, this bill will lead to a reduction in the number of inquiries sent by applicants to the licensing entities regarding their application status, which should allow for staff to spend more time processing these applications and performing other duties.

CONTACT

Danielle Parsons
(916) 651-4038
danielle.parsons@sen.ca.gov