

DRAFT

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USA Today Response

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Your recent article regarding the proliferation of model legislation raises important concerns about how laws are being made.

The problem goes beyond being an unseemly way for crafting public policy: rubber-stamped, model legislation can have real repercussions for public trust and public safety.

Our professions have experienced this firsthand. The public relies on us for the integrity of its most important finances and to ensure buildings are structurally sound and safe. Our professional standards are rigorous for a reason. Yet, we have been swept up in model legislation that seeks wholesale weakening of licensing standards.

Legislators have responded to our concerns by stating that the legislation was intended to reduce regulation for many trades and vocational occupations, and wasn't intended to include us. In fact, many didn't realize it did - they simply acted on the model bill.

Intentional or not, the reality is that we often face careless legislation which threatens professional standards that ensure public safety and trust.

Perhaps legislators would have paid more attention to these bills' nuances if they weren't packaged and marketed as model bills. What is clear, is that over-reliance on model legislation undermines thoughtful consideration of the issues, evaluation of what solutions are actually needed, and the responsibility to carefully craft good policy that addresses problems without creating new ones.