

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 342

(Delegate Behler, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Forestry Licenses - Applicant Qualifications - Alterations

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This bill alters the educational and experience qualifications for an applicant for a forestry license from the State Board of Foresters. Under the bill, the applicant must have graduated (on completion of a four-year curriculum in forestry) from a college or university that is (1) approved by the board *and* (2) accredited by the Society of American Foresters. An applicant may also satisfy educational requirements for licensure if the board determines that the applicant's education (including a comparable graduate degree or international degree) is substantially equivalent to statutory requirements. The bill repeals a requirement that an applicant must have at least two years of experience in forestry to qualify for licensure.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The State Board of Forestry can implement the bill's licensing qualification changes with existing resources. No material effect on revenues.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The State Board of Foresters licenses and regulates foresters to ensure the appropriate use of natural and timber resources, watershed protection, and the preservation of ecological systems and wildlife habitats. It has the authority to investigate complaints against licensed foresters and deny, suspend, or revoke a license and reprimand a licensee for specified offenses. Instead of or in addition to suspending or revoking a license, the board may impose a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 for each violation.

Among other requirements, to qualify for a license, an applicant must have graduated on completion of a four-year curriculum in forestry from a college or university that is approved by the board *or* accredited by the Society of American Foresters. The applicant must also have at least two years of experience in forestry that indicates to the board that the applicant is competent to practice forestry.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 8, 2026  
caw/mcr Third Reader - March 20, 2026  
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