

June 21, 2017

Mr. Gerard J. Reis  
7913 Augusta Lane  
Concord, OH 44077

The Honorable Louis W. Blessing III  
Representative, District 29  
77 S. High Street, 13th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Blessing:

I understand that the committee you chair, the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, is currently conducting hearings on House Bill 189.

Both of my daughters have invested significant time and money to become educated, trained and the licensed by the Ohio State Board of Cosmetology. We strongly oppose further changes to Ohio's licensing regulations.

In 2016, the Ohio Legislature worked with the Ohio Salon Association (OSA), the Professional Beauty Association (PBA) and the Future of Beauty Industry Coalition (FIBC), as well as independent salon and cosmetology school owners, to update Ohio's cosmetology licensing regulations. Senate Bill 213 was signed by Governor Kasich only one year ago, in June.

*Why the need for more changes now?* Senate Bill 213, unfortunately, did not go far enough for these organizations. While these groups characterize HB 189 as economically favorable for cosmetologists, the truth is these groups are a front for corporations that run national chain salons that want to dominate the Ohio market and eliminate competition -- at the expense of predominantly female-owned, independent small business salon owners.

HB 189 significantly reduces licensing requirements. When has lowering the bar for training and education ever been the correct solution? When we hire a professional, do we ever think, "*I wish that person had less training?*" It is not just "cutting hair." My daughters are responsible for infection prevention, equipment decontamination, customer safety and a range of other hygiene issues that require proper training.

Today, the Ohio licenses my two daughters earned enjoy reciprocity with 28 states, giving them freedom and independence in choosing where to earn a living. If HB 189 were to become law, that likely will drop to two states. Ohio always has set a high bar for training and education nationally, let's not lower it now.

The bottom line is that HB 189 impacts public safety, it harms independent, female-owned small businesses and creates a less educated workforce while strengthening the position of corporate salons that will pay their employees less.

We urge you and your colleagues to strongly oppose HB 189 (and its companion bill in the Senate, SB 129). SB 213 was the agreement reached between all key stakeholders in 2016 and the State should honor that legislation.

Respectfully,



Gerry Reis