

LADIES & GENTLEMEN

AVEDA SALON • SPA



**CASAL
AVEDA INSTITUTE**



**BROWN
AVEDA INSTITUTE**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee. Thank you for allowing me to testify in favor of House Bill 186, legislation that would provide an income tax deduction for certain college-related expenses.

My name is Edward Brown and I am the CFO and owner of the Brown Aveda Institutes, Casal Aveda Institute, and Ladies & Gentlemen Salon and Spas. We are located in Mentor, Strongsville, Austintown, Fairlawn (Summit Mall), and Lyndhurst (Legacy Village) Ohio.

I am privileged to have the opportunity to share my views on this very important piece of legislation which I believe will add to the many constructive economic changes the State of Ohio has implemented over the last several years.

As both a small business owner and the proprietor of a for-profit technical school, this legislation will have a positive impact on many fronts, i.e. for the students attending a post-secondary school - it creates an incentive to finish and improves their prospects of employment in Ohio. It can help a graduate who has to repay any student debt, and it can improve the likelihood of a graduate staying here in our state to live, to work and to pay taxes, helping to grow our State's work force and its economy.

Our 3 schools combined graduate an average of 325 students each year. From a post-secondary schools perspective, and technical school owner, we offer financial aid to our students and we are required to carefully track their progress - from enrollment, through graduation, through their first position. For a period of 3 years thereafter, we are required to monitor all loan repayment history. We must do everything we can to prevent any of our students from defaulting on their student loans. I am not aware of this being a requirement for non-profit institutions or any public institutions. While a difficult challenge, and arguably unfair, we accept this benchmark as one measure of our schools overall success and focus on delivering a high quality, skill based education to our students.

I strongly believe that any incentive that can enhance the benefits of a post-secondary education, including any financial assistance to help graduates with their responsibilities towards repayment of their school loans, is not only good for our local, state, and federal governments, but it is in the student's best interests towards becoming independent and responsible tax-paying citizen. Offering the financial adjustments proposed in this legislation can assist in the likelihood of loan repayments, in addition to the incentive to seek a job and maintaining a residence here in Ohio.

Please move this important bill forward to keep our graduates here in this state and to assist our businesses with finding talented individuals. Thank you for listening.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ed O' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.