

Proponent Testimony on Sub. SB 129
Before the
Senate Government Accountability and Reform Committee
By
NeCole Cumberlander, Owner
The Ohio Academy Paul Mitchell School
December 12, 2017

Chairman Coley, Vice Chairman Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni, and members of the committee, my name is NeCole Cumberlander. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on Sub. SB 129. I urge your support for the bill.

I have enjoyed a successful career in the beauty industry for over 25 years as a stylist and salon owner. In 2004, my husband, Orlando, and I expanded our company and opened Paul Mitchell Cosmetology Schools in the Cleveland and Columbus markets where we employ over 70 people and graduate over 300 students per year. I also formerly served on the State Board of Cosmetology for several years, representing the school owners' seat on the Board. I currently serve on the Board as the cosmetologist member.

As you have heard in other testimony, SB 129 contains several provisions that reasonably reform Ohio's cosmetology statute. In particular, I would like to address the move to 1,000 hours. Due to the Federal Gainful Employment Law, we have had to examine our business models to ensure that the numbers add up and that students continue to qualify for federal student aid in order to attend our schools. What I have realized is that state mandates requiring more hours which cost more for students to pay back are of concern to us and our students. Studies show that 1,000 hours is the right number. And we have actual proof of that working in Ohio.

In Ohio, career technical cosmetology programs have historically only required approximately 1,000 hours of education. The other 500 hours are achieved through high school math, science and anatomy classwork to reach the 1,500 hour state requirement. Private cosmetology education requires 1,500 hours for licensure. The state should not mandate 500 hours more in private education versus public education. More private hours simply force students to stay in training longer and take on more student debt before entering the job market to begin earning wages to pay back student loans. We want our students to be able to get into the workforce as soon as they are able to begin building their reputation, and be gainfully employed, so that they can service the public and begin to pay back their loans.

I was that young woman starting my journey in the beauty industry as a student 25 years ago. I believe so strongly in providing a solid educational foundation for men and women entering the profession that I became a private school owner myself. If the state changes the required hours for all cosmetology education, whether public or private, my school will adapt to ensure students are prepared to start their careers in the beauty industry.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your time and the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Sub. SB 189 to the committee. Your consideration to support the comprehensive reform package to Ohio's cosmetology laws will greatly be appreciated.