



# Ohio Small Business Council

## *BEFORE THE SENATE GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT AND REFORM COMMITTEE*

### *PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON SB 129*

*TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2017*

Chair Coley, Vice-Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 129. My name is Brandon Ogden and I am the Director of the Ohio Small Business Council for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce regularly tackles issues related to workforce development and business overregulation. It is not uncommon for member companies to express concerns that they are having difficulty finding qualified workers. Or even that they believe excess government regulations are impeding their ability to grow their businesses. One recent example of this has to do with cosmetology licensure laws. Currently in Ohio, private cosmetology schools are able to require 1,500 training hours before students are eligible to sit for the state board examination. Many of these hours are spent in a classroom and not actually working with hair, nails, makeup or other areas of practice.

The Ohio Chamber supports SB 129 which addresses the concerns of salon owners across the state. The legislation harmonizes public and private education by reducing the licensure hours to 1,000. It is worth noting that this reduction in training hours is likely to attract cosmetology students to Ohio from surrounding states. It is critical that Ohio become more competitive than other states, as salon owners are beginning to cite workforce shortages. If the educational hurdles are not addressed soon, the increased workforce shortages within the industry could take several years, possibly even decades to reverse.

SB 129 also establishes a cosmetology apprenticeship program. Given the fact that dozens of cosmetology schools have closed in the past couple of years, this option could address the reduction of educational opportunities for prospective students. Apprenticeship programs also have the benefit of providing students with hands-on experience instead of an excessive amount of book work. Apprentices have the benefit of getting paid to work while learning their trade, instead of paying tuition while sitting in a classroom and racking up potentially more than \$30,000 in student loan debt.

Finally, most salons are small businesses. Small business owners already face a tremendous amount of regulation and red tape. The passage of SB 129 would send a clear message to those

entrepreneurs that the government understands the challenges they face and want to remove industry barriers.

Chairman Coley, thank you again for the opportunity to testify on SB 129. I am happy to answer any questions that you or members of the committee may have.