

Written Opposition Testimony re: HB 399
Before the
House State and Local Government Committee
By
Jennifer Pealer
February 17, 2020

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House State and Local Government Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide opposition testimony on HB 399.

My name is Jennifer Pealer. My brother, Joseph M. Sullens, and I both own two salons and their parcels in Mentor. We employ over 50 families and service close to 30,000 clients per year. We've been in business for the past 26 years with several 20 year plus employees.

Today I'm reaching out to you with deep concern about the recent trade program cuts. In the upcoming school year, the schools have decided to decrease the number of students in the cosmetology program by 50%. With that reduction, it is eliminating teachers. There are also additional cuts to the other areas in programs. The main concern of mine, other salon owners and businesses that utilize this school for future employees is that there will be a trickle-down effect.

Currently Vocational enrollment in the cosmetology program is 100% fulfillment with a waiting list. With the elimination of one classroom program, there is an economic affect. The economic downturn would eliminate skills that service many communities.

I ask how can decreasing your vocational enrollment grow your economy and support your beliefs? I would have thought that you would have reached out to your external stakeholders for data regarding how valuable and successful your students are in our communities and businesses.

Currently the trades industry has a significant need for trade employees and is only growing.

By elimination of student training in the trade industry there will be a negative effect on the economy, economic growth, housing, and other gainful employment that continues to help small communities to grow and contribute to local and state revenue.

The forecast on the growth of the cosmetology trade is growing at 8%, currently a national average. Faster than all occupations. Cosmetologists not only work in salons, their license allows them to be able to grow into other fields such as doctor offices, sales representatives, teachers, and plastic surgeons' offices, where those offices require a license for the provider to be able to physically touch someone.

Failure to see our future can be detrimental. When cosmetology is a thriving career, and when there is a 93% passing rate and a waiting list at your school, it doesn't seem logical to eliminate 50% class enrollment. In addition many schools have provided a large investment in your current teachers and it should be noted that their dedication and commitment has resulted in Vocational job placement in many communities.

Many business owners, myself included, rely on Vocational graduates to hire and maintain the Vocational development in our community. My concern is serious and I cannot imagine anyone wanting our community's future growth to be stifled by cuts in the trades.

With the information I've provided you today and by looking at the numbers, we can clearly see there is still a need for a thriving cosmetology program. Therefore it is critical that the entire cosmetology program remain intact throughout our state.

Thank you all for your time and concern today.

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This testimony should be emailed to the following committee members, as well as your own state representative. Don't forget to delete the highlighted areas, and the addresses below.

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