



HOUSE BILL 277 – BARBER AND COSMETOLOGY LICENSURE

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

OHIO HOUSE COMMERCE & LABOR COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 15, 2022

Chairman Stein, Vice-Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the Ohio House Commerce and Labor Committee, my name is Cameron Garczyk and I serve as the Member Benefits Program Manager for the National Federation of Independent Business in Ohio (NFIB). I am here today on behalf of the nearly 22,000 governing members of NFIB in Ohio to lend our support for House Bill 277.

NFIB is a small business trade association founded in 1943 that is dedicated to representing the interests of small and independent businesses across our state and nation. NFIB members come from all industry sectors and are in all 88 counties across Ohio. Our average member has 15 or fewer employees and has less than \$2 million in annual gross receipts. We represent members ranging from sole proprietors to S Corps and LLCs with over 100 employees.

I am testifying as a proponent of House Bill 277 because if enacted, this measure would be a proactive step in modernizing Ohio's licensure system for the barbering and cosmetology industry. NFIB's interest in this legislation is to ensure that our laws are not overly burdensome and serve as barriers to individuals pursuing their passions. We have heard from a number of our members in this industry who believe this legislation will successfully aid their current workforce needs.

The main goal of this legislation is to reduce the minimum number of hours required to obtain licensure. Currently, to earn a license for barbering in Ohio, one must complete 1,800 hours of training, for cosmetology, the number is 1,500, and for hair design, the number is 1,200. By reducing both barbering and cosmetology to 1,000 hours and hair design to 800 hours, House Bill 277 will provide students an opportunity to earn a living and pursue their passion in a less time-consuming manner and at a cheaper overall cost. Salon and barbershop owners will benefit by having a larger candidate pool and individuals

just beginning their trade will be able to earn a salary quicker and be saddled with less debt for their futures.

Numerous states across the country have already instituted a reduction of required hours for this industry. In fact, three of the four largest states in the nation: California, Texas, and New York, have already reduced the required hours for cosmetologists to 1,000. With this bill, Ohio will become a leader nationally and the first in the Midwest to produce meaningful and sensible licensure reform for this important industry.

NFIB fully understands and agrees that health and safety are paramount when it comes to providing these types of services. Business owners have no incentive to hire individuals who are not properly trained in the correct protocols and lower the quality of their workforce standards that could lead to legal liability. This bill does not change any safety or health requirements that students must learn.

House Bill 277 also establishes reciprocity and makes moving to and working in Ohio more attractive. Individuals who are licensed in another state and move to Ohio can begin working immediately and will no longer have to complete additional onerous testing to conduct their trade in the Buckeye State.

By requiring fewer hours and thus lowering total educational costs, more prospective students may be attracted to this field. As everyone in this room is aware, we are currently facing a staffing shortage of immense proportions in Ohio and nationally. NFIB's most recent national monthly jobs survey found that 47% of our members are currently experiencing a moderate or significant staffing shortage.¹

Another important point to note is that this legislation simply establishes a new floor, it does not establish a ceiling. Thus, any school is more than welcome to maintain a higher number of required hours if they so choose. In fact, some schools may select to offer more in-depth programs that require more training, and they are free to do so under this bill.

Other positive features of this legislation include, among others, the establishment of regional testing facilities for students, the addition of a virtual learning component, and a reduction in required hours for current practitioners who wish to earn additional licensure in their field.

¹<https://www.nfib.com/foundations/research-center/monthly-reports/jobs-report/>

House Bill 277 is a win-win for students and business owners in the barbering and cosmetology industry. It is our hope that by easing the burden of debt and reducing hours, we can encourage a greater entrepreneurial spirit in the industry that leads people to start their own businesses. NFIB believes this legislation will pay dividends for students wishing to learn the trade and for salon and barbershop owners who are struggling to hire employees, and thus we urge its passage.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 277. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cameron J. Garczyk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and 'G'.

Cameron J. Garczyk
Member Benefits Program Manager