

Shaun Norton

Chairman Stein, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and members of the Ohio House Commerce and Labor Committee, My name is Shaun Norton and I am a licensed cosmetologist shop owner for a men's hair salon, Sport Clips. I express my support for HB 277.

I currently own salons in Indiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire along with 10 salons in Ohio. Staffing is a concern nationwide, but many of my Ohio stores are at risk of closing permanently due to the extremely limited number of applicants to my open positions. This problem is originated by the large barrier to entry in the beauty schools. Our employees are working mothers and sometimes single working mothers. They need to have the schooling to be able to perform the services correctly and risk free for the public, but they also need a quick path to using their new skill so they can earn wages to support their families. With the amount of school needed today, the potential beauty school applicants will choose a different, non-skilled profession simply due to the amount of hours needed to complete the training or schooling.

We need the common-sense reforms put forth in HB 277. Other states have already implemented these reforms. These reforms will allow beauty professionals to begin working, paying taxes and succeeding in a great career and will ensure our industry will prosper in Ohio.

Cosmetology hours:

- *1,000-hour cosmetology programs already exist in other states including CA, NY, MA, TX and VT. STATES HAVE SUCCESSFULLY TRAINED STUDENTS IN 1,000 HOURS FOR DECADES. Why is Ohio keeping students in school longer?*
- *A study by a third-party research firm that was funded jointly by salon operators and the national beauty school association documents that longer curriculums have no benefit to the students, yet the higher costs of completing a 1,500+-hour curriculum – both tuition and living expenses for the longer programs – result in higher student loan debt, which is a significant burden to these graduates. Pass rates, completion rates, and wages earned upon graduation do not change with the length of the program.*
- *By reducing minimum hours requirements, students will incur less debt and start earning money more quickly setting the students up for success.*

Common-sense licensing standards are critical for sustainable growth of our industry. Please consider these necessary reforms to allow Ohio to be a great place for cosmetologists and barbers to get their education, get licensed, enjoy great careers, and earn a great living. Our industry needs your help.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the committee with proponent testimony on HB 277.

I urge your support for the bill.

Sincerely,

Shaun Norton