



February 10, 2022

The Honorable Dick Stein
Chairman, Ohio House Commerce and Labor Committee

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 277

Dear Chairman Stein:

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and our thousands of members, I write to you in support of House Bill 277; legislation that makes changes to Ohio's cosmetology and barber laws and licensure system. The Cosmetology Reform Act would reduce the number of licensure training hours for cosmetologists and barbers to 1,000 each as opposed to 1,500 and 1,800, respectively.

The Ohio Chamber regularly tackles issues related to workforce development and business overregulation. Many times, our members express grave concern with the struggle to find qualified workers and that government regulations impede their ability to grow. An example of this is in the private cosmetology school setting where there is a requirement that an individual have 1,500 training hours before being able to sit for the state board examination. Many of these hours are spent in a classroom and not actually practicing the trade.

HB 277 is a common-sense reform that will translate into individuals achieving licensure more expeditiously. Salon owners throughout the state continue to cite staffing shortages and difficulty finding qualified employees that are not saddled with high student loan debt as chief concerns. Shortened cosmetology programs may translate into lower tuition costs and, in many cases, lower student loan debt. Lowering the barriers to entry, such as cost and a lengthy licensure process, can prevent individuals from foregoing cosmetology as a viable career path while not sacrificing quality.

Lastly, many salon owners are small businesses who already face a tremendous amount of regulation and red tape. The passage of HB 277 will send a clear message to these entrepreneurs that Ohio understands the challenges they face and wants to remove barriers to individuals entering this industry.

It is for these reasons that we ask for you to support HB 277. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding our support of HB 277 at kboehner@ohiochamber.com or 614-228-4201.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin Boehner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin Boehner
Director, Small Business and Workforce Policy