

Proponent Testimony on HB542
By Shanna Makda
Before the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee
November 30, 2022

Chairman Roegner, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Craig and members of the Senate Government and Oversight Committee, as a licensed stylist and Ohio salon owner, I **urge your support for HB542**.

My name is Shanna Makda and like a lot of licensed stylists, this was always my dream and my focus. My parents have owned salons for 30 years. From the age of 10, I was in their salons, watching and hanging out. By the time I was 14, I was a receptionist in one of their salons and helping where I could. My mother is a licensed stylist and I have worked my way up in our company. I have been involved in the family business since 1998, graduated from college in 2008, and became a licensed stylist in 2009. This was always the plan....to be a part of this great, vibrant industry. I am licensed in Illinois and Ohio. This is all I ever wanted to do.

I currently have full responsibility for seven salons in Ohio and 24 salons in Chicago. My position allows me to be in the salons and guide our staff. I love working with stylists in the salons and helping them grow and learn. I have seen the ups and downs, related to licensing and debt. That is why I am a proponent of **HB542**.

Recently, I had a stylist who wanted to come to work in one of my salons. She had her work permit and then went to take the test. She failed and now she is not able to work until she takes the test again. Right now, there is quite a wait, due to the pandemic. But the reality is that many stylists struggle with the test. Pre-graduate testing would be helpful for them to be successful and become fully licensed. Around 30% of stylists don't take or pass the exam. These are students who were committed to the career but became discouraged or fearful. Pre-graduate testing would allow them to learn what they need to pass the test.

I also see the reality of school loans and debt. I hear people say that the debt is not that high, but my experience is different. There are specific federal programs that come with a lot of requirements. There are penalties and increased costs that can spiral to a very high level. We often must garnish wages for debt. This leads to a cycle of changing employers to start over until the government catches up to the next employer. I believe a reduction in hours and the resulting reduction in costs and time would be meaningful. The fact is that it takes 33% more time and more money to complete 1,500 hours versus 1,000 hours. The government funding and debt model provides equal support for the number of hours. And at 1,000 hours, students would be working and earning a wage four to five months earlier.

Cosmetology research concluded that increased hours did not improve completion rates or exam passing rates. It also concluded that there wasn't any impact on wages. So why more hours? We should be efficient in the education model and licensing should be focused on health and safety. I work with stylists throughout the country, and I don't see any difference in skill levels, nor would I ever demean or think poorly of a stylist from New York that completed their education in 1,000 hours. In fact, I think it's interesting that New York, one of the fashion and beauty hubs of the world, only requires 1,000 hours and produces world class hair and beauty. I don't think hair is any different in Ohio than in New York.

And as almost 10% of the population move every year, the mobility/reciprocity part of the bill would be helpful. It seems like it should be like your driver's "license." Once you have a license and are in good standing, if you move to Ohio, it should be recognized.

This legislation is important to me because this industry is a part of my life. I have a passion for this business and our employees. I want to guide them and help them better their lives. I want them to be successful and any of these obstacles are unacceptable to me.

Please support **HB542** and reduce the barriers in this great profession!

Respectfully,

Shanna Makda