

**Proponent Testimony on HB542**  
**By Sandy DeLong**  
**Before the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee**

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

This is the first time I have ever provided written testimony, but this is really important to me.

My cosmetology license allowed me to provide for my family. I believe that this is a great career with unlimited potential. I am passionate and committed to this industry. I have been a licensed stylist for almost three decades. I have been a stylist, a corporate employee, an educator and a salon owner. I have worked with interns and have served on a government committee focused on internships and have been active with cosmetology schools.

I became a salon owner in 2003 and currently have four salons and have about 40 licensed stylists working in my salons. I am proud to work side-by-side with them and I listen to them every day. I have had students work as receptionists and interns. I hear the concerns about graduating, becoming licensed, and managing the expenses/debt.

Reform needs to happen in our industry. Cosmetology licensing and education has been the same for decades. Our industry needs to remove barriers to attract more students to this incredible career. We can attract more students, help them get licensed and keep them in the industry.

This legislation levels the educational playing field. Public high schools around the nation and in Ohio already have graduates at around 1,000 hours of cosmetology education. They pass the state licensure exam at the same rate as higher hour students. Comprehensive research clearly indicates that outcomes are not any different in higher hour states. Why would we force students to take on more debt and spend more time in school when it will not change their

wages, their pass rates, or their graduation rates? And Ohio is technically allowing career tech students to start working at 975 hours. But students choosing a private cosmetology program after high school is required to complete 50% more hours. That doesn't seem fair to me.

Reducing hours does not limit reciprocity with other states. The reciprocity rules vary dramatically and are changing all the time. Keeping hours at 1,500 hours does not guarantee reciprocity in other 1,500-hour states. This legislation allows license endorsement for those seeking to transfer their license to Ohio. Hair is hair...it doesn't change from one state to another. Reducing the burden of transferring a license to Ohio will make it easier to live and work in our great state. Arizona, Florida and Illinois have passed similar legislation.

With 1,000-hour programs, stylists would get to work more quickly, earning a great wage. Let's do what's right for students and stylists by passing this legislation. This legislation covers three meaningful changes: a reduction in hours, pre-graduate testing, and improved mobility. I believe these changes focus on what's most important to students and future beauty and barber professionals.

**I urge you to support HB542.** Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Sandy DeLong