

PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON HB542

BEFORE THE SENATE GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT AND REFORM COMMITTEE

November, 2022

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

I own 21 hair salons located in the Columbus, Ohio metropolitan area. I want to express my support for the cosmetology reforms contained in HB542.

I've been a small business owner since 2002 when I chose to leave my position in corporate America. It has been a great decision for me. I have approximately 200 employees and want to do all I can to continue to support these employees and their families.

We desperately need the common-sense reforms put forth in SB 133 that will remove the cumbersome obstacles to entry into our industry in Ohio. Many other states have already implemented these reforms without any negative consequences.

License Mobility:

- Currently, AZ, FL and IL provide full license mobility while Ohio puts up barriers. With effective mobility, licensed stylists are more likely to continue to work and pay taxes rather than change careers or work unlicensed.
- Hair is hair and is not different depending on your state. I have also lived in NJ and FL where the required hours are hundreds of hours less and have found the hair stylists in those states to be just as good as those in Ohio. Why would we want to make it difficult for them to work in Ohio?
- We should follow states that have passed similar license recognition/endorsement laws. It also says to those with out of state licensees in good standing "Welcome to Ohio. We are glad you are here and want to work and/or raise your family."

Cosmetology hours:

- 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. As a salon owner, I see no difference in the skill levels of the graduates of longer programs.
- A 1,000-hour cosmetology license exists in several states: CA, RI, NY, MA, TX, and VT. Over 100 million people reside in states where stylists are licensed in 1,000 hours. With a state 1,000 hour minimum, we would ensure the basics would be taught to all

students and then schools would have the flexibility to add hours based on supplemental topics such as successful salon ownership and other advanced topics. This would create positive marketplace dynamics to offer various options based on student desired career paths. Students would get to choose these advanced options.

Testing process and access:

- Over 30% of students, who complete cosmetology school never successfully take and pass the cosmetology test. The opportunity for pre-graduate testing allows them to be retrained in identified skills and gain confidence to successfully complete their license exam.
- We should permit practical exams to be administered by schools and written examinations administered through regional/local testing centers, like with other careers that require licensing tests.
- Several states have a similar provision in their state law today to allow for pre-graduate testing.

In Ohio, 47% of salons are owned by minorities and 77% of those businesses are owned by women. Our continued success is dependent on the ability to hire licensed professionals to meet all the customer demand. Common-sense licensing standards are critical for sustainable growth of our industry while still protecting public safety.

Please consider these necessary reforms to allow Ohio to be a great place for cosmetologists and barbers to easily complete their education, get licensed, enjoy great careers, and earn a great living. Our industry needs your help.

Respectfully,

Debra Tillery

Debra Tillery
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