

## PROPONENT TESTIMONY, HB 542

Before the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Chairwoman 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**.

### **Introduction**

My wife and I have been in the salon industry for 22 years and own 16 salons. We value and treasure the long-term relationships we have with our stylists. We admire their ability to adapt, their open minds, and their continued focus on learning.

I wish to lay out the facts about what it is like with newly licensed stylists and the challenges we face with the educational process in place today.

### **Hours Requirement**

I am very confident that the “reduction in hours” is not an actual reduction. It reflects what is occurring today with internships in salons, including ours. A Career Tech student needs to have 1,500 hours, but 375 are broad academics and 150 can be internships. These students can begin work in my salons at 975 hours. Private schools operate in the same manner by completing internships in their salons. Students are providing services, often with less than 1,000 hours. I have never seen a discernible difference in skill sets between Career Center grads and private school graduates.

The current 1,500 hours does not ensure a new graduate is better prepared to join the work force than the 1,000 hour proposal. The fact is, that regardless of the hours required, all salons hire a new graduate with the knowledge there will be training required. A newly licensed stylist is no different than a student graduating from college. They learn the basic concepts and fundamentals on haircutting and coloring along with safety, sanitation and infection control. Our business is highly dependent on the repeat business of customers and salons will not want to harm their reputation by having a poorly trained stylist providing services. In the 20 years I have been doing this, not one newly licensed stylist has come out of school and is fully prepared to cut hair. The license simply gives them permission to start their career and their training in the salon. Reducing the hour requirement to 1,000 hours will NOT make a new graduate less trained or less ready or less successful. Keeping the requirement at 1,500 hours does nothing for the salon owner, but it increases the student’s debt and delays their entry into the work force. It has been aggressively communicated that the lower hours reduce the Pell Grant and potential debt. That is accurate, but the reduction is consistent with the reduction of hours and time necessary. I have attached a chart, taken from opponent testimony, and added notes. It is less because the need is less based on the time necessary to complete the program. It is a mischaracterization to say that they don’t qualify or qualify for less. the Pell Grant and debt are in proportion to costs and time.

The private school requires and documents that a student has completed 1,500 hours of training, but it is not all classroom time. A recent graduate in my employment, started her training at a private school as a “junior” and spent nine weeks in the classroom learning safety and sanitation rules and regulations. This was four days per week, and six hours per day. Moving up to “senior”, she worked in the school’s salon for

the remainder of her time until she reached the needed hours. She actually interned with us for 150 hours out of boredom because the salon school served very few customers and did little to further her education. And while working in the school salon, she did not earn an income and the school profited on her tuition and services she completed. This type of curriculum is not uncommon in the private school sector. This stylist graduated with \$19,000 in student loan debt. This is significant debt starting out in your career and is not uncommon.

### **Pre-Graduate Testing and Locations**

It is not unusual for a student to fail their State Board testing due to testing nervousness and traveling a long distance to the single testing site that exists today. I fully support allowing students to take a pre-graduate test to become familiar with the process and allowing them to test at their school, in familiar surroundings. This would increase graduation rates and allow a student to begin their career more quickly, efficiently, and with the confidence that they are prepared.

High School students take the SAT and ACT in hundreds of locations across the State and a student studying in the cosmetology or barbering field should not be treated any differently.

### **License Reciprocity**

There isn't any practical reason why a stylist or barber when transferring a license from one state to another should have to do anything other than provide their existing license. We have hired several stylists from out of state and our focus is on their experience, not how many hours of education they completed. That simply has never been asked because it is immaterial.

Chairwoman Roegner and members of the committee thank you for allowing me to submit proponent testimony on **HB542**. I hope you find the testimony informative, and I appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective.

Sincerely,

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