

**Proponent Testimony on HB 542**  
**By Alex Harris**  
**Before the Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity 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 salon owner, and your constituent, I **urge your support for HB542**.

My name is Alex Harris, and I am part of a family business that operates salons in Ohio and Florida. I have a bachelor's degree in business management and prior to joining the family business, I had experience in customer service in banking and I was a data specialist. Neither of those positions required a license or had any limitations related to my mobility. Initially, I was intrigued to learn the differences in licensing between the different states, but after working with stylists to relocate, found the process can be overwhelming. Through my eight years in the business, the value of the license is clear and it's a strength in our business. But, I believe we need to reduce some of the barriers to create great job opportunities.

Our family business operates eight salons in Ohio and eight salons in Florida. Ohio requires 1,500 hours of education and Florida requires 1,200 hours of cosmetology education. In my role as a general manager, I interact with stylists every day in both states. I also work with new stylists to gather information and understand the needs that they may have when they join our organization. I can honestly say that there is no difference in the skills they have, regardless of the hours of training that they've completed. Experience certainly makes a difference, but for a new student, our support and training are the same.

It surprises me that the range of hours are so broad working across states, from 2,100 in Washington to 1,000 hours in New York and several other states. It seems like licensing should be based on the least amount of hours necessary to protect the health and safety of the public.

Additionally, there should be concerns about the cost and time associated with higher hours. There isn't any difference in completion rates, graduation rates, starting wages or other education outcomes based on number of hours (AIR Research). Currently there are four states that operate very well with a 1,000-hour requirement, so it's hard to justify more hours. It's also interesting to note that over 55 million people reside in states and are served by stylists with 1,000 hours of training. Two of the most populous states, New York and Texas require 1,000 hours. I can't imagine that they see any difference, nor would they know the hours a stylist may have completed.

As I operate in two states, I know that additional opportunities may be available in our organization if mobility and reciprocity were easier. I may have talented staff in Florida that may want to pursue a growth opportunity in Ohio. I believe stylists in good standing, with a valid license from any state, should be able to work in the state of Ohio. This means simplifying

the reciprocity process as outlined in this legislation. Let's make it easy for people to improve their lives and grow their careers by moving to Ohio.

I have committed my career to this business and this industry, with many years ahead of me. As I work with stylists and see the opportunities they have, I believe we should reduce barriers to create more great jobs. I know our organization will continue to grow and focus on their careers and opportunities.

When I joined the family business, my focus was to carry on the family legacy. I wanted to help grow the business and have a meaningful impact on people's lives. I knew that wouldn't be possible in the large organizations or banks where I previously worked. I am honored to be a part of the family business and look forward to being a part of this industry for decades.

Thank you for your consideration and support of [HB542](#).

Respectfully,

Alex Harris