

Megan Davis House Bill 58 Proponent Testimony

Chairman Johnson, Vice-Chair Manchester, Ranking Member McNally and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 58.

My name is Megan Davis from Toledo, OH and I am in favor of HB 58.

I'm an African American wife and mother of 7 and I have an adult disabled child with multiple disabilities and is aged out of many community programs, therefore I'm her primary caregiver.

Although I have attended a cosmetology school, I was unable to complete it due to the excessive hour requirements and having to provide care for my daughter. The curriculum does not include instruction, for African-American textured hair to include locking, braiding, twisting, or natural hair care. There is also a lack of diversity in instructors and a lack in cultural inclusion in cosmetology in general. Over the years, the Ohio Board has not changed the curriculum nor do they require any of these techniques or skills to be licensed in this state. The other boutique services they are challenging are also not a part of the curriculum or state tested licensing requirements.

Further, the Board does not require tanning practitioners or tattoo and piercing artists to complete any formal training or sanitation and laws and rules to operate chemicals and body altering tools; and in Ohio, you can become a licensed practical nurse, in fewer hours and for a similar amount of tuition for a secure career.

What I do was taught to me by other women who looked like me and took time to share the techniques and tools to manage and style my own hair and hair like mine. The opposition of this bill is has a direct impact on African American and Minority, Women Owned business in Ohio.

I support HB 58 for these additional reasons:

Braiding is safe. It does not need to be regulated because practitioners do not use dyes, straighteners or other chemicals. It poses no risks that consumers cannot manage themselves.

Braiding provides a vehicle for individuals to engage in their own economic advancement. It allows Ohioans to start, operate and own their own businesses. And provide for their families, especially in challenging circumstances such as caregiving which is increasing in our communities post COVID.

The bill moves Ohio's regulation of braiders in the right direction. It repeals unnecessary requirements. It also promotes economic liberty.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to not just go further, but to see this through. The committee should amend the bill to remedy the problems that arise from the fact that Ohio has the nation's most complicated licensing regime for braiders. Specifically, Ohio uses both (a) an unnecessary 450-hour specialty license for "natural hair stylists" and (b) registration as a boutique service provider.

Please work with us to simplify Ohio's current regulations, and at this time I will answer any questions the Committee may have.