

Opposition Testimony to SB 89
Before The Government Oversight Committee
September 27, 2023

To: Chairperson Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson,

Members Lang and McColley

Senators, please take action to stop SB-89, which cuts Cosmetology hours by a third or more for Barbering. As a cosmetologist of over 15 years and now educator, I cannot understand how anyone would agree that reducing education could have a positive outcome.

Without proper training, Cosmetology and Barber students will not be prepared to enter a competitive workforce. Less time in school equates to not only less information being given, but also less time to become competent enough in their skills. This will not only force them to spend more money and time seeking additional learning and training after school, but will also greatly impact their self-esteem, confidence and ability to earn a better living for themselves. The time to build their confidence and competency is during school, before they are expected by their clients and their employers to perform at a stylist's level. Most salons cannot afford the time or money it will take to train new graduates to the level they need to be at in order to function independently. So the majority of our current salon owners, who are mostly women, will not be able to fill employment vacancies.

Our students deserve the opportunity to become skillful in their trade, so that when they become licensed, they have actual opportunity. Opportunity to gain desired employment, become business owners or work for themselves, which the majority of our industry does. The impact will not only affect our future professionals, but also the public that we serve, who are under the assumption that when they go to receive a service from a licensed professional, that that person is qualified to be providing these services.

It is not only about the talent behind them either. The tools we work with, chemicals we apply and procedures we offer require a vast knowledge and training on how to use them properly, as well as time to retain and hone the information and skill. We can cause severe damage if we're not properly trained and educated. We need time to not only teach techniques, but also safety, proper disinfection procedures and infection control, so that our future professionals are not spreading diseases, hurting or severely harming the public.

Our students also deserve choices. The HB33 Conference Committee removed identical provisions from the budget and passed a compromise to lower the license for hair design to 1,000 hours. We need to allow time for this language to take effect and investigate its impact on our industry before additional changes are made. They also deserve the choice of transferring their license out of state. Reducing hour requirements would reduce the opportunity for reciprocity to only 5 states, none of which even border Ohio.

Our current industry professionals also deserve to protect the value of the licenses they hold and worked so hard for. As a member of the beauty and barber industry, we ask that you protect our profession from this legislation which is intended to flood the market with minimally trained licensees to benefit a few powerful interests that do not represent the vast majority of voices in our profession.

Thank you for your consideration.