

Waverly Willis
November 30, 2022
Substitute HB542 Opponent Testimony
Ohio Senate Government Oversight Committee

Thank you Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Ohio Senate Government Oversight Committee. My name is Waverly Willis. I am a licensed Barber of nearly 20 years, a barbershop independent contractor chain owner, barber instructor, Executive Director of The Urban Barber Association(TUBA) & Chairman of the Ohio Barber and Beauty Alliance(OBBA). I am here to speak against HB542 from the vantage point of still practicing barber, barbershop owner & barber instructor.

Barber students are rarely fully equipped to work in or open a barbershop after completing the 1800 hour curriculum as it stands today. As an owner operator & a fellow barber I have to continually step away from clients in my barber chair to assist the new barber to polish their hair cutting skill set and sanitizing practices in order for them to gain experience resulting in them having more confidence to build their clientele . One of the biggest contributors to my barbershops growing clientele are the disgruntled customers of the larger & more corporate chain barbershops. Their customers come to us angry because they have a terrible haircut. Over the years under my tutelage at least 10 of my former barbers went on to become barbershop owners. This was intentional. The plan was for them to work under me and then open their own shop.If the 1800 hour curriculum is shortened the student's will be worse off than they are now. Veteran barbershop owners like me will not be able to use them because it will take far too much time work for us to bring them up to par. On the contrary the people that will be able to use them are the larger corporate chain barbershops because they want to keep them as barbershop employees versus barbershop owners . This bill is made for certain individuals like some of the people that sit on our state barber board that own corporate style chain barbershops. They need workers for their businesses. Less hours equals less qualified people to own their own business it's that simple .

As a barber instructor we have 21 chapters of book work to drill into students while simultaneously having them practice proper sanitation & various haircuts on various hair textures . We also teach classes on being an entrepreneur & how to set a business up properly.We bring in experts on taxes, LLCs, marketing, budgeting, branding etc. To graduate they have to complete a minimum of 800 hair services & have a GPA of 80% or better. We would have to sacrifice some of the curriculum if the hours are cut. So I ask you what would have to go? It can not be the services because they have to know how to cut hair in order to be a barber. It can not be sanitation because we have to protect the public from germs, disease & infection. We would have to sacrifice the business & entrepreneur portion which makes them employees & not business owners upon graduation which is exactly what the powers that be want.

In my opinion 1800 hours has never been enough hours to teach everything but we make it work. I'm asking you to please allow us to continue to produce FUTURE BUSINESS OWNERS & NOT EMPLOYEES.