

**Proponent Testimony on SB133 (Written)**  
**By Rhoda Olsen, Vice Chair, Great Clips, Inc.**  
**Before the Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee**  
**On Monday, May 3, 2021**

---

Chairman Rulli, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee, my name is Rhoda Olsen. I am the Vice Chair and former CEO of Great Clips, Inc. located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I want to express my support for the cosmetology reforms contained in SB133.

Great Clips, Inc., is the largest haircare brand in the world. We are a franchise organization, and our 1,200 salon owners operate over 4,400 salons in the United States and Canada. Our growth had been strong pre-pandemic and we successfully navigated the pandemic with limited salon closures. Our franchisees are strong, local, committed business owners and care deeply about their employees' success and growth. We have over 40 franchisees in Ohio that operate more than 300 salons with over 2,500 talented, well-trained stylists.

I have been a part of the Great Clips leadership team since 1987. I became president in 1998, CEO in 2011 and moved to Vice Chair in 2018. I also served as President of The International Salon Spa Network (ISBN) for four years, concluding in 2019. ISBN represents over 30,000 salons/spas. I am personally committed to the growth and development of salon professionals throughout the country. I am also a member of the Future of the Beauty Industry Coalition. The industry has changed dramatically over the last 25 years and we need to be responsive to those changes. Operating in almost every state gives us a clear view of stylist training and education. I don't see any difference in the stylist training and skill in any state, regardless of hours. Cosmetologists with 1,000 hours of training are as skilled as any stylists in the country. Over 30% of the population are trained in less than 1,250 hours. Many organizations provide their own additional training and online training is readily available and widely accessible. State licensing should focus on safety, sanitation, and basic requirements. It was clear throughout the pandemic that lower-hour states were as well trained in safety and sanitation and were able to adjust their protocols as quickly and effectively as states with higher hours.

I feel strongly that we need reform and look to Ohio to be focused on common sense and encourage a great work environment and opportunity. In addition to hours, mobility/ reciprocity and pre-graduate testing are critically important. Ohio borders five states: Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Indiana, and Kentucky. Stylists from these states and other states should be afforded the growth opportunities that may be available in Ohio. Some of our largest franchisees operate in Ohio and career growth is very important to stylists. Let's make it easier for them to work, pay taxes, grow our businesses, and live in the wonderful state of Ohio.

The common-sense reforms you are considering in SB133 are necessary to position the Ohio cosmetology industry for survival with the hope of continuing to thrive. As legislators, you need to know the truth about this industry in Ohio – not just from my perspective, but from the perspectives of many license holders – both individual and salon owners. There are 35,953 salon establishments in Ohio (pre-pandemic). Their continued success is dependent on the availability of licensed stylists to meet their demand. Reducing hours, providing increased mobility, and allowing pre-graduate testing will reduce barriers and support job creation.

The current governmental climate with respect to the beauty industry is concerning. The beauty industry has been impacted by the federal government and state regulators to make changes to streamline the entry process to our profession. Additionally, school closings citing government regulations and increased scrutiny of industry programs have reduced training opportunities. The industry must come together with one voice to enact change; if we fail to advocate for our industry, the result could lead to deregulation of our industry licenses. The professional license became so much more important during the recent pandemic. Customers value the license more than ever!

Common-sense licensing standards are crucial to sustainable growth for our industry and protecting public safety. Together, we will build a stronger future for our industry and continue to support accountability and licensing of our professionals.

#### **Cosmetology Schools in Ohio:**

- Communities in Ohio, as well as salon owners, need great schools and educators who are passionate about this industry and about providing meaningful foundation education to the students.
- Over 30 percent of private school programs have closed in Ohio since 2015, many without notice to their students. There have been ongoing school closures.
- Cosmetology schools are well prepared to offer pre-graduate testing. This allows students who may struggle, a better opportunity to pass. Over 30% of students who complete school, fail to obtain a license.

#### **Cosmetology Hours:**

- Ohio high school programs are already training at 1,125 hours. Therefore, the equalization of hours at 1,000 for both private beauty schools and high schools makes sense for Ohio. Two of the most populous states, New York and Texas require 1,000 hours.
- Pass/fail rates between high school and private schools are comparable.
- High school students benefit from taxpayer funding while private school students acquire significant debt. A reduction in hours will reduce overall costs and provide earnings more quickly.
- With 1,000 hours as a state-required minimum, nothing precludes schools from offering more hours. But anything above 1,000 would be optional.

#### **Reciprocity/mobility**

- Experienced, well-trained stylists have difficulty getting their license across state lines. This became more overwhelming during the pandemic when they may have been able to work in an adjacent state. They should be able to get to work quickly without burdensome requirements and delays.
- It should matter to us that licensed professionals want and need the ability to move across state lines. License-for-license exchange would allow stylists to keep working and reduce the likelihood that they work unlicensed and are not paying taxes.

Common-sense licensing standards are crucial to sustainable growth for our industry and protecting public safety. As other careers struggled due to the pandemic, demand remained high in cosmetology careers. Cosmetologists were back to work quickly with the foundational training to adjust. The stability and predictability in their earnings were also impressive during the pandemic. SB133 is a strong example of reasonable legislation that directly addresses concerns of over-regulation of state-mandated, occupational licensing and will create meaningful changes to archaic cosmetology licensing laws that desperately need reform.

On behalf of all our Ohio franchisees, I urge your favorable action on this bill. SB133 allows aspiring cosmetologists to learn the profession more quickly. They will experience lower levels of student loan debt and more importantly, be in a position to provide for their families.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on SB133 to the committee.

Respectfully,



Rhoda Olsen  
Vice Chair  
Great Clips, Inc. Board of Directors