

# Senate Bill 133 Cosmetology Licensure

## Opposition Testimony

Ohio Senate Small Business & Economic Opportunity Committee

May 17, 2021

Chairman Rulli, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Ohio Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee My name is Ladasha Wright. I am a salon owner and licensed cosmetologist. Please do not support SB 133. I begin my plea with a quote from Marian Wright Edelman, "Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it." SB 133 offers no such improvement or opportunity.

My testimony addresses two pertinent reasons why you should vote against SB133. The first reason is diversity. The world of cosmetology and barbering are no longer straight hair, fades, blondes, and bald heads. A push to accept this diversity is via the C.R.O.W.N (Creating Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair) Act; that was introduced by former congress woman Marcia L. Fudge in May of 2020. This act ends 400 years of hair shaming, oppression, and outright discrimination against people of color with textured hair. The very nature of the presence (4 White males) of Professor Edward Timmons of Mercatus at George Mason University, Jeff Dillan of America for Prosperity, Chris Ferruso of NFIB (National Federation of Independent Business in Ohio), and Tony Fiore of Ohio Salon Association proves the need for 1500 to 1800 hours of education. Though their testimonies were quite compelling, they do not reflect the reality of who works, owns, and does business in our industry. Per Mr. Fiore's testimony, he stated the breakdown of the number of salons, barbershops, and licensed technicians of our industry being predominantly women. He also stated, the bulk of salon owners and licensees are predominantly minorities. SB 133 is a slap in the face to the bulk of us who work and toil in this industry. As a Black woman standing here reading this, it is sad and tiring to see such lack of sensitivity and acknowledgement for the much-needed diversity, equity and inclusion that is deliberately being overlooked by the mere suggestion of dumbing down our industry according to the unspoken gold standard of White America's interpretation of beauty, who can beautify and how. The creators of SB 133 by representation alone (7 Caucasians) further reflects lack of sensitivity to these realities.

It is no big secret; the beauty and barber industry have longstanding issues of segregation. As an educator and salon owner who provides internship, I can tell you from experience, there are far too many White students and just as many licensed White technicians who are not able to service individuals with textured or locked hair. But on the other hand, Black and Brown students have historically sat quietly for over 100 years never complaining once to being subjected to learn and train from concepts that are conducive and beneficial to those of lighter complexions with less to no texture at all on humans and mannequins; as if theirs did not matter. Please understand only quality in-depth education can bring about a resolve.

Second, as for the comparison of licenses in the UK, I believe Professor Timmons research is not accurate. A quick Google search refutes his position. While licenses are not required there are several certifications and verifications, such as the NVQ (National Vocation Qualifications) a hairdresser and salon owner must have to open and operate. Their NVQ levels begin at intro level one to masters (as in master's degree) level 7, so, in retrospect, UK's standards exceed Ohio's 1500-to-1800-hour mandate. Improvement and opportunity for future cosmetologists and barbers will not come from 750-1000 hours and cookie cut salon apprenticeship programs. Those menial requirements are sure to hurt local economies, omit diversity and compromise inclusion. Unfortunately, they are also coupled with "no compete clauses" that traps employees who typically work in fear of the legal repercussions. Please think hard about the two strong positions I have made. Look around this room, your work place, and your community; does it have a similar sentiment of SB 133's "fast track, right to work, lack of diversity, keep the government out our business; with poorly educated people who are vying for the same job?" In closing, to reiterate SB 133 will not provide any serious job opportunities and open the floodgates of employment to aspiring students, but 1500 to 1800 will leave our communities and world better than we found it.

Respectfully submitted,

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