

DATE of PUBLIC HEARING: March 29, 2021

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC HEALTH

**TESTIMONY IN RESPONSE TO HB6666 AN ACT CONCERNING THE
COSMETOLOGY LICENSE AND RESTORING ALL OF THE LICENSE.**

I would like to thank the esteemed members of this committee for allowing me the opportunity to testify in response to HB6666 an act concerning the cosmetology license and restoring the license. I am a cosmetologist in the state of Connecticut, my name is Tara Conner owner of Tg Alchemy. I am an independent contractor for the Goodspeed Opera house and specialize in cutting (as well as being a certified educator to fellow stylists on how to cut) women's hair with a straight razor as well as wig design and time period looks on men including their facial hair for the shows. Many of these actors are high profile. I am writing on behalf of the Connecticut Beauty Association to showcase the oversights of the new regulations and how they are not beneficial to our industry. There seems to be a lack of education and insight to how diverse our industry is and I would be happy to educate you on that.

I realize that it is necessary to have all nail service providers in the state of Connecticut licensed and registered with the state, and that these changes are important for the benefit of everyone's well being including the issue of human trafficking. They should also be required to have an infection and disease control course under their belt and pass the necessary examination. Many schools offer these programs and they are only two hundred hours. However, the changes that have been made do not benefit those who have had the proper education, passed the required examinations and been practicing within the industry legally for the last ten to 40 years. These changes do quite the opposite and are very damaging to our livelihoods in a time when many are barely making it by in the midst of the pandemic. Relief for sole proprietors, independent contractors and salon owners was almost too little too late. These additional fees are a direct blow to a struggling industry who prides itself on helping those we care for feel better about themselves.

The state also overlooked how this would affect the curriculums and tuitions offered at cosmetology schools and their revenues. Recently, having spoken with the directors of many cosmetology schools, who belong to an association of their own, were completely unaware of the new regulation changes and were baffled as to how they were left out of the loop. They are scrambling to figure out how to rework their curriculums to accommodate separate licenses when the average program is fifteen hundred hours and nine months to two years to complete. The programs cost approximately fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. The directors are concerned that if they offer abridged curriculums of just esthetics, or barbering, or nails that it would significantly cut down on the annual revenues and many schools would have to shutter. In a time where college is unaffordable for many high school graduates having limited schools open to the beauty industry trade would hinder an entire generation to be able to support themselves in a profitable and gratifying career option in which an individual could choose their areas of passion and specialty under a single inclusive license.

Additionally, the state is uneducated in how certain cutting implements are used to obtain different lines in media design. Regulating blades by blade type is extremely limiting to the creative aspect of our beautiful industry. Scissors only cut straight or minorly textured lines. Neither of which are flattering on the majority of people due to the asymmetry of everyone's face. We are taught in our curriculum the fundamentals of cutting with a solo blade (also known as a straight razor) to allow curved lines into the overall silhouette. When dealing with different face shapes, and convex or concave facial profiles, having the ability to offset less than desirable characteristics by collapsing or texturizing the hair strands through curved lines is imperative to creating the essence of beauty. Without it, the individual would have a boxy or choppy haircut. Slide cutting with scissors is another method, but when it comes to the hands of the artist the tools need to be available. As a cosmetologist, we have been trained in the areas of barbering. We had to shave balloons and work directly on the skin. We passed an examination proclaiming our understanding of technique and infection control.

With a plethora of worldwide continuing education available to us as a licensed cosmetologist we have the ability to grow our skill set to include new techniques and new tools to expand our creative freedom as well as our incomes. Our clients want what is new and innovative otherwise they will seek out someone who is willing to try new things on them. The beauty industry is always evolving and always bettering itself. This new regulation is a blatant misrepresentation of how we function as an industry. It's come at what couldn't be a worse time for us financially. Many educators don't know how to proceed and will have to completely rework their education system as well as the examination board changing its test. It has always been an inclusive, unified license of the study of cosmetology, which by textbook definition is the study of hair, skin and nails and the different methods of their removal and care. Cosmetologists need to be able to perform the services under one license as was originally intended. Any future changes need to involve someone knowledgeable from the industry, preferably from the Connecticut Beauty Association and only affect those who did not receive an education and pass an examination demonstrating their proficiency in the trade.

Thank you for your time and willingness to learn more about the serious implications on what this has done to the cosmetology industry in Connecticut as a whole. I would love to answer any questions you may have. I can be reached at Tgalchemy6@gmail.com 860-302-8792

Thank you,

Tara Conner
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Tg Alchemy_