

Virginia Legislature
HB 322 (Glass)
Hearing: February 1, 2024

My name is Loan Nguyen-Bovey and I am a licensed cosmetologist and resident of Virginia. I am also married to a retired Lieutenant-Colonel, United States Army. I have experienced many challenges with my cosmetology license through military relocations.

Before I was married, I owned my own business and had worked for several national brands prior to that. I had over 20 years of experience in the my chosen field of cosmetology. It was necessary for me to sell my business to relocate with my husband. Even with decades of experience, the license reciprocity process was cumbersome and time consuming.

These are the issues I faced:

- Residency - must currently reside in the State
- Educational Hours - must meet the States requirement (these vary from as little as 800 hours to 2,100 hours). For those States where I did not have the hours, I was required to seek further education with no constructive credit for all of my years of experience.
- Testing - many required that, in spite of my educational requirements being met, I needed to demonstrate my ability as a cosmetologist by taking a written and technical examination. Unfortunately, in many of the States, these tests are only offered quarterly and at a centralized location which requires both availability and transportation (as well as potential lodging). This comes at a great cost in the form of time and money for the military spouse. Should the service member be deployed, it may be impossible for the military spouse to travel due to family responsibilities.
- Reciprocity - for those States that offered reciprocity, many of the above issues were still factors. Reciprocity requires an administrative lag time. We found that some states are better than others in meeting their administrative responsibilities. This still delayed the ability to search for and accept employment, especially while preparing and conducting the move.

This compact resolves many of the issues that I faced as we moved around the globe in support of our nation's calling. This allows the service member and their family to plan in concert with their move and removes some of the barriers our military (especially our young military families) face in meeting their daily personal budgetary needs. Working in the Tidewater area of Virginia, which has a large military presence, I have worked with countless other military cosmetologists who faced similar challenges throughout their careers as well.

Also, as I work side by side with licensed cosmetologists, I believe they should all benefit from the compact. Their lives may require temporary support of family members and it would allow them to have the ability to work while they are temporarily relocated.

I believe all States should allow universal licensure and compacts between States to enable our military families the ability to move with ease and peace of mind, be it a return from overseas or from State to State.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Loan Nguyen-Bovey