

Proponent Testimony on HB322 (Written)

By Corie Harper, Maryland resident

Thursday, February 1, 2024

My name is Corie Harper. I am your constituent, a licensed stylist, and I urge you to support HB322.

I have been a licensed stylist for 25 years and have had the opportunity for a great career in the beauty industry.

I attended cosmetology school in Florida and was able to start working in a salon after I completed my education. I was not yet licensed in Florida when my family moved to Maryland. It was a difficult and cumbersome process to become licensed in Maryland. It was time-consuming and delayed my ability to earn a living.

I am passionate about the cosmetology industry. My career has included stylist, consultant for a product distributor, admission leader at a cosmetology school, director of a new cosmetology school, and Operations Manager for an international haircare brand.

I have listened to hundreds of students and stylists, and I have heard their concerns and frustrations with the burden of relocating and pursuing their careers across state lines. I currently support stylists and salon owners in Virginia, Maryland, DC, North Carolina, and West Virginia. Many of the salon owners have salons across state borders. Stylists may be unable to work a few miles away. That doesn't make sense to me.

I support HB322:

- Bi-directional mobility: This compact is the only type of reciprocity that benefits residents of Maryland. This will allow our residents to work in other states, should they need to work temporarily in another state. Military family members could work in another state as long as they are stationed in that state.
- Stylists could better meet the needs of multi-state businesses and take advantage of growth opportunities.
- This would reduce the burden of licensed stylists who may have to temporarily relocate due to family/personal issues.
- If a stylist cannot easily move and continue to earn a living, they may work unlicensed or change careers. They should be able to continue to work in the career they love.
- The comprehensive, shared database will provide full transparency of licensee's history. Any licensee working in your state that requires discipline would have the same actions taken as a Maryland licensee.

Thank you for your consideration of HB322.

Please remember that hours may vary from state to state, but all states require consistent, comprehensive safety and sanitation curriculum. That is always the state's priority. States already allow reciprocity, but it is burdensome and doesn't acknowledge the situation of multi-state careers. This compact would provide incredible flexibility and career growth for cosmetology students and licensed stylists. Let's remove barriers for licensed stylists so they can continuously earn and grow.

Thank you.