

February 13, 2024

**State of Colorado, House of Representatives**

**RE: HB24-1111**

**Prime Sponsors: Representative Matthew Martinez and Senator Byron Pelton**

**Committee: Business Affairs & Labor**

As a Colorado resident and business owner, I ask for your **support of HB 24-1111**. This Compact legislation would provide meaningful benefits to licensed Stylists and businesses.

As a Great Clips franchisee, I have a growing salon business with 14 salons and employee almost 100 licensed Stylists. I look forward to continued growth and opportunities for my staff.

Prior to becoming a Great Clips franchisee, I had a 38-year career with Junior Achievement with many growth opportunities over those years. I retired as Vice President of Benefits & Compensation. Throughout my JA career, I relocated multiple times, helped others relocate and know first-hand that relocation can provide professional growth opportunities. Now, in the salon business, I believe licensed Stylists should have that same ability to take advantage of opportunities beyond their state line.

We have management and Stylist opportunities and we regularly have Stylists apply from other states. The reciprocity process is cumbersome and time-consuming. It can take 2-3 months and it's unfair they can't start working right away. My late wife and business partner, Jane, who passed away in 2015, would always start conversations with Stylists relocating from other states with, "have you started the process?" to get licensed in Colorado. She would prepare them and help them, but they would sometimes become overwhelmed and discouraged. If their Colorado licensing drug on or was delayed, they would often have to take a different job, rather than do what they love. Relocation is stressful and it would help so much if they could start working right away on their former state's license, while they are waiting for their Colorado license to come through.

We have great careers and waiting customers but need Stylists to get back to pre-COVID levels of employees. Allowing fully licensed Stylists from other states to easily work in Colorado would help fill our open positions. We remain down 18-20% from our pre-COVID employee numbers, and staffing is our biggest impediment to business growth.

As you know, Colorado is a very "mobile" state. In addition to routine military relocations, we have massive numbers of seasonal employees. Approval and adoption of the Compact would make it possible for their spouses and family members to work while they are here short-term.

This legislation provides bi-directional mobility. This also supports the residents of Colorado who may need to work in another state due to a family emergency or other personal issues. We know we have residents who move in and out of Colorado.

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Please consider the following as you review this legislation:

- Compacts are considered the gold standard for military spouses and families. Although many states offer “expedited licensing” for military families, that can still take significant time and money and could require additional hours and/or testing. We should do whatever we can to support our service members and their families.
- The Department of Defense will fund a fully transparent database that will share real time information about licensees’ history and license status.
- This legislation is broadly supported by cosmetology schools, licensed stylists, cosmetology students, product manufacturers and distributors, business owners and our military. It simply has huge benefits to everyone associated with the industry.
- The Compact is intended for temporary work situations but helps those that are permanently relocating. They can begin to work right away while they are navigating the reciprocity process. Even if the state of Colorado works aggressively to process reciprocity requests quickly, they must rely on other states and the applicants may have to wait for school records, proof of work affidavits and other pieces of information. This Compact would mean they can start working right away and not experience lost wages.

Thank you for your close review of this legislation. I believe that the closer you look, the more you will see the incredible benefits to licensed Stylists moving into Colorado as well as to our Colorado residents who may need to temporarily or permanently relocate.

Respectfully,



Frank W. Evans  
President / Franchisee

## **State of Colorado**

### **HB24-1111**

**Prime Sponsors: Representative Matthew Martinez and Senator Byron Pelton**

**Business Affairs & Labor**

#### Proponent Testimony

My name is Kenny Gallegos, and I am a resident and business owner in Colorado. I urge you to support HB25-1112 to reduce barriers for licensed stylists and support multi-state businesses.

I own six salons in the greater Denver area and employ 50 licensed stylists. And I recently brought my three daughters into the business and look forward to ongoing business growth and expansion. My legacy will be a multi-generational family business that cares deeply about our stylists and provides unmatched growth opportunities.

Prior to being a salon owner, I worked in IT in the telecommunications industry. My responsibilities spanned five states and I could easily work in other states. I believe stylists should have the same opportunity to continuously earn a living, even when they temporarily or permanently relocating.

With more than 2 decades of experience in the industry, I will continue to advocate for students and licensed stylists. I have continued to share my concerns about the location and difficulty of the license exam, with Representative Matthew Martinez. From my area, it can be 3-4 hours, 2 different days and a 30-day delay if you don't pass the test. This is an example of another barrier for talented, motivated licensed stylists. We make it difficult for them to work across state lines or easily get their license, so there isn't a gap in earnings. This legislation would remove a significant barrier, so I am advocating again on behalf of licensed cosmetologists.

Recently, I had an experienced manager that relocated to Denver. She wanted to go to work right away. It took almost three months to get her Colorado license. I was able to hire her as a receptionist, but the pay was so much less. This seems so unfair...she was so qualified and should have been able to work right away in her profession.

I had another stylist relocate from Oklahoma to flee domestic abuse. It adds so much stress to their lives when they can't earn a living in their profession. We are understanding and helpful, but they must navigate license reciprocity process. This Compact would allow them to work right away, until they receive their Colorado license.

There are many reasons to support this Compact Legislation:

- Funded by the Department of Defense, the Compact assures military spouses/family members can easily work in their profession, regardless of military relocations.
- It will reduce incidents of stylists working without a license, given the time and difficulty to gain reciprocity.
- There will be a comprehensive, transparent database that will provide real-time information about licensees' current information and license status.
- Compacts are the only form of reciprocity that is bi-directional, meaning it benefits Colorado residents that may need to relocate temporarily or permanently.

- A cosmetologist that has an active, unencumbered license in a compact member state may apply for a multi-state license. This would allow them to work in another state temporarily, or on a special project or accept a multi-state opportunity.
- Many other professions enjoy the benefit of a Compact, they are not new. The nursing Compact is 20 years old and there are 40 participating states. If it works for medically related fields, it should work for cosmetologists.
- Allowing licensees to work across state lines means that business owners can staff based in on seasonal needs and could help address staffing shortages.

Please support HB 24-1111. There are so many great career opportunities, and this would make it easier for stylists to take advantage of multi-state positions. It would mean so much to licensed stylists who want and need the freedom to work wherever they may have to relocate.

Thank you.

**Kenny Gallegos**

Kenny Gallegos