

February 5th, 2020

Hello members of the Senate Committee on Education,

Thank you for taking the time to review SB 1544 and the impact that it has on our students. I do believe the bill's overall goal to protect all students from non-quality schools is an excellent goal. However, the current bill as it stands is confusing and is taking post-secondary options away from students.

The Aveda Institute Portland (AIP) is a cosmetology school in Oregon, with over 2000 graduates, as well as the only Oregon cosmetology school that accepts VA benefits. Since 2008, AIP has been accredited by NACCAS which holds institutions to procedural, operational, and educational standards. In addition to these standards, AIP has gone above and beyond the curriculum and clinic service requirements from both NACCAS and the State of Oregon Board of Cosmetology.

One important metric for regulating institutions is the completion, licensure and placement

Aveda Institute Portland 2018	
Completion Rate	68.03%
Placement Rate	72.89%
Licensing Rate	83.80%

rates that are published yearly. This ensures that students are provided with the necessary support and resources to succeed during their program, to obtain a license to practice and ultimately to start their official career practicing in the industry.

There are additional administrative costs for schools to accept VA benefits. This includes a VA certified staff member with training hour requirements and a closer monitoring of students' academic and attendance progress to ensure they can continue to qualify for their benefits. For many schools, additional restrictions on VA funds could make the program unfeasible which would take away many options for students that wouldn't be able to pursue higher education without VA. At this point, we at AIP are proud to serve our veteran students.

When it comes to the beauty industry, every hair stylist, barber, nail technician and esthetician must complete a series of benchmarks and hours before taking written and hands-on practical assessments to obtain their license. These programs not only provide the safety and sanitation knowledge to practice in this industry safely and hygienically, but they can teach what is necessary to be a proficient stylist in the workforce.

This kind of training, with experienced instructors, a school-salon floor with real guests, and hands-on learning isn't something offered widely at public universities and community colleges. When a student decides to start a career in the beauty industry and is trying to take the first step, the public sector fails to provide adequate options for them. In the Portland metro area, there was only one public college that offered cosmetology, and that program is being ended this year.

Out of 1,250 job openings including hairstylists, nail techs, makeup artists, and skin specialists there are 562 unfilled jobs. There is a great demand for jobs and huge earning potential within this industry in Oregon. Schools should not be punished for giving veterans the option to pursue it.

Thank you for your time,

Ray Motameni
503-939-0775