

March 3, 2022

Chairperson Hildebrand and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 348.

My name is Susan Wurtele (Dr. Wurtele), I am Co-Owner of Entourage Institute of Beauty and Esthetics in Lenexa, Kansas.

I understand that you have heard compelling testimony from both those in opposition and proponents of Senate Bill 348. I want to first state that I am not a licensed Esthetician. I am a highly educated, female Entrepreneur and Educator. I empathize with and understand arguments on both sides of this Bill.

My concern is that in very succinct terms, Senate Bill 348 is not the solution. Senate Bill 348 is flawed.

There are currently over 26,000 licensed professionals with the Kansas Board of Cosmetology. The overwhelming majority of these professionals are women. Women from remarkably diverse races, economic, geographic, and social backgrounds. Women who were able to quickly enter the workforce as trained, skilled practitioners. Educated women who take their profession seriously to protect themselves and their clients.

I understand the argument that there are only 40 hours of Hair Removal which includes Threading currently in the Kansas Board of Cosmetology required curriculum. I agree, without additional knowledge that seems to be few in a 1,000-hour program if someone's goal is to be a Threading Practitioner. What is not stated is that there are over 430 hours that involve Skin Analysis and Consultation, Skin Anatomy and Physiology, State Laws, Business Practices, and Infection Control. All these subject areas are critical to a Threading Practitioner or Business Owner.

The education received as a Licensed Esthetician is not just about the 40 hours of hair removal. Threading and other services are addressed throughout the curriculum in nearly every aspect.

Senate Bill 348 would require the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to develop a brochure containing information about infection control techniques appropriate for Threading, the individual would be required to complete a self-test as a form of competence. A brochure? A self-test? I can read a brochure and pass a self-test but trust me, you don't want me to perform Threading hair removal on you, your friends, or family.

SB348 lacks measures to ensure any individual that identifies as a Threader possess the skills, knowledge, training, business acumen, infection control and sanitation compliance standards to freely provide a service to the public. There is no mention of regulating Threading, who will ensure the infection control techniques learned from the Brochure are practiced? Who will ensure the average consumer will have their hair removed safely, without skin abrasion, lesions, or thread that has not been in the Practitioners mouth? Yes, this is a common concern with Threading techniques.

Without quality education and license requirements there is no way to guaranty the continued quality and safety measures of Free-Range Threaders. Senate Bill 348 results in the opposite of providing females the opportunity to enter the workforce quickly in geographically challenged areas and become successful business owners. It sets them up to fail and it fails to protect consumers.

I respectfully ask you to join me in supporting the 26,000+ currently licensed Practitioners in the State of Kansas by defending the integrity of their Profession and safety of the public consumers by opposing Senate Bill 348.

