

**Testimony of the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology**

**Before the  
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection  
Tuesday, February 7, 2025  
9:50 a.m.  
Conference Room 229 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
S.B. 1621, RELATING TO NAIL TECHNICIANS**

Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kerrie Shahan, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology (Board). The Board will review this bill at its next publicly noticed meeting on February 11, 2025. For now, it offers the following comments:

The purpose of this bill is to direct the department of commerce and consumer affairs to adopt rules establishing (1) a separate license for nail technicians; and (2) corresponding licensing requirements for nail technicians.

The Board notes that there already exists a separate license for nail technicians from the cosmetology license. Chapter 439A-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) states: “nail technician” means a person licensed in the State who engages for compensation in any of the following practices:

- (1) Cutting, trimming, polishing, coloring, cleansing, or otherwise treating a person’s fingernails and toenails;
- (2) Applying artificial fingernails and toenails; and
- (3) Massaging and cleansing a person’s hands, arms, legs, and feet.

Further, chapter 439A-6 (g), HRS defines the corresponding licensing requirements for nail technicians: A nail technician applicant shall have an education equivalent to the completion of high school and either:

- (1) Seven hundred hours of training as a beauty apprentice in a beauty shop or barber shop under the supervision of a cosmetologist, esthetician, or nail technician; or
- (2) Three hundred fifty hours of training in a beauty school.

The training hours for a nail technician are significantly fewer than the training hours required by a cosmetologist (3600 apprenticeship training hours or 1800 hours training in a beauty school).

In addition, the Board requests that “esthetician” be removed from chapter 439A-6 (g) HRS, on page 2, line 3, as manicuring/pedicuring is outside the scope of estheticians and is not a training requirement for the esthetician license.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 1621, RELATING TO NAIL TECHNICIANS.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

**DATE:** Friday, February 7, 2025

**TIME:** 9:50 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 229

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Andrew I. Kim or Christopher J.I. Leong, Deputy Attorneys General

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Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill requires the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to adopt rules establishing a license and corresponding licensing requirements specifically for nail technicians separate from a general cosmetologist license.

Under existing law, there already exists a separate license category for nail technicians apart from a general cosmetologist. Section 439A-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), provides in part: "No person shall for commercial purposes practice as a barber apprentice, beauty apprentice, barber, beauty operator, or beauty instructor; operate a barber shop, beauty shop, or beauty school; or announce or advertise as being prepared or qualified to practice or operate unless the person obtains a license or permit as required by this chapter." Under section 439A-2, HRS, "[b]eauty operator" means one of the following license categories: cosmetologist, hairdresser, esthetician, or nail technician." Additionally, section 439A-6(g), HRS, lists separate application requirements for nail technicians. Under this statutory framework, there is a separate license category for nail technicians, and the Board has the power to adopt rules establishing corresponding licensure requirements. See section 439A-5(a)(4), HRS (the Board has the power to establish rules "governing the practice of barbering and practice of cosmetology and the standards and requirements for apprenticeship training and courses of training provided by schools, which shall have the force and effect of law.").

We recommend amending page 2, lines 6-7, to read "meet requirements pursuant to the rules adopted by the ~~[department.]~~ board." Additionally, we recommend amending section 3, on page 2, lines 8-13, as follows:

SECTION 3. The ~~[department of commerce and consumer affairs]~~ board of barbering and cosmetology shall adopt rules to establish[:

- ~~(1) A nail technician license that shall be separate from a general cosmetologist license; and~~
- ~~(2) Corresponding]~~ licensing requirements specific only to the practice of nail technicians.

To allow for time for the Board to adopt rules, a delayed implementation of the Act is advisable.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Feb. 7, 2025, 9:50 a.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

**LATE**

**To: Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection**  
**Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair**  
**Sen. Carol Fukunaga, Vice-Chair**

**From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii**  
**Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns**

RE: COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF SB1621 — RELATING TO NAIL TECHNICIANS

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Fukunaga and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its **support** for [SB1621](#), which would require the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to adopt rules establishing a license and corresponding requirements for nail technicians.

This bill is a commonsense reform of Hawaii's overly broad cosmetology license regime. Obtaining a cosmetology license in Hawaii can be both expensive and time-consuming, yet much of the instruction in that program is not relevant to nail technicians.

The state Board of Barbering and Cosmetology already recognizes that nail technicians have separate needs and requirements, hence the different training standards listed for nail technicians in the Hawaii Beauty Operator license application.<sup>1</sup>

Creating a separate, more relevant path to licensure for nail technicians would expand opportunity for those who wish to enter the profession but are deterred by onerous licensing requirements.

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

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<sup>1</sup> "[Beauty Operator Application](#)," Hawaii Board of Barbering and Cosmetology, accessed Feb. 5, 2025.

**SB-1621**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:24:59 PM

Testimony for CPN on 2/7/2025 9:50:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Yi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB 1621.

Occupational licensing requirements can sometimes be unnecessary barriers to entry into certain professions, often making it harder for qualified individuals to pursue their desired careers. In many cases, these requirements are designed with good intentions but can have unintended consequences, especially when the scope of training required is irrelevant to the tasks of the job.

In the case of nail technicians, requiring them to undergo extensive training in cosmetology (which includes fields like hair or skincare) may not only be unnecessary but also a financial and time-consuming burden for those who only wish to work in nail care.

By creating a separate license specifically for nail technicians the requirements could become more focused, allowing skilled individuals to enter the workforce more quickly and effectively while still maintaining public safety and professionalism. It also opens the door for a more inclusive and accessible path to employment, helping people to pursue their passions without being boxed out by overly restrictive rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**LATE**

**SB-1621**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:47:17 PM

Testimony for CPN on 2/7/2025 9:50:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current licensing system in Hawaii for nail technicians requires costly training and is a huge barrier. These expensive requirements don't necessarily lead to higher wages, and they prevent people from entering the profession or starting small businesses. Updating the licensing law would allow more people to work, support themselves, and contribute to the economy. Please support SB 1621.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**LATE**

Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Committee Members -

My name is Leslie Roste with the Future of the Beauty Industry Coalition in support of SB 1621.

I have worked as a subject matter expert on health & public safety in the professional beauty industry for over 15 years. During that time, I have seen an evolution in licensing that has benefited those entering the industry and ultimately benefitting the consumer. This evolution has allowed those who wish to pursue a specialty license like nails or esthetics (skin) to do so without completing a lengthy and costly program that does not focus on their chosen specialty. Currently, a prospective nail technician in Hawaii must complete 1800 hours of education that covers hair, skin and nails. While that umbrella license allows a cosmetologist to provide services in all three areas, it is rare, in my experience, to find someone who actually provides all three services.

In the printed curriculum of schools in Hawaii, a cosmetology student spends 1100 hours dedicated to hair exclusively and only 150 hours dedicated to nails. While some of the general education hours such as infection control certainly add to those hours, it is clear that the student who only wants to pursue a career in nails is subject to the costs and time of an education that spends the majority of its time training for hair services. In addition, there are very few questions about nail technology on the cosmetology board exams, but if there were a nail specific license, it would require passing of a nail specific exam.

Passage of SB 1621 would preserve the cosmetology license as it stands today, but also allow a potential licensee to pursue nails specifically, something that may draw more potential licensees into the profession and allow for focused training that will improve skills and subsequently consumer safety.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Roste, RN

lgroste@gmail.com  
816-955-1643



