THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 2876

JAN 23 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO NATURAL HAIR BRAIDING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that natural hair braiding is a traditional practice that does not present significant health and safety risks to consumers or practitioners. While natural hair braiding is distinct from the practice of cosmetology or barbering, existing law has been interpreted to require natural hair braiders to obtain a license from the board of barbering and cosmetology, imposing an undue burden on those who engage in natural hair braiding as a profession. Because licensees are required to undergo education and training for cosmetology practices that are outside the scope of natural hair braiding, such as nail care and makeup application, the purpose of this Act is to exempt natural hair braiders from licensing requirements under the Barbering and Cosmetology Licensing Act under certain conditions.

SECTION 2. Chapter 439A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§439A- **Natural hair braiders; exemption; conditions.** (a) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to require a natural hair braider that engages in the practice of natural hair braiding to obtain a license under this chapter; provided that the natural hair braider shall not perform or attempt to perform services regulated under this chapter or advertise services in such a way that misleads consumers to believe that the natural hair braider offers services that are otherwise regulated under this chapter. Any natural hair braider who violates this subsection may be subject to sanctions authorized under this chapter for the unlicensed practice of barbering or the unlicensed practice of cosmetology.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a person from obtaining a private certification or an employer from requiring a person to obtain a private certification.

(c) For the purposes of this section:

"Braiding device" means clips, combs, crochet hooks, curlers, curling irons, hairpins, rollers, scissors, blunt-tipped needles, threads, or hair binders.

"Natural hair braider" means a person who engages in the practice of natural hair braiding.

"Natural hair braiding" includes:

(1) Twisting, locking, wrapping, weaving, cornrowing, extending, or braiding hair by hand or with braiding devices, and the minor trimming of hair extensions incidental thereto;

(2) The use of natural or synthetic hair extensions, natural or synthetic hair and fibers, decorative beads, and other hair accessories;

(3) The making and lacing of wigs from natural hair, natural fibers, synthetic fibers, and hair extensions; and

(4) The use of topical agents, including conditioners, gels, moisturizers, oils, or pomades in conjunction with the performance of the practices described in paragraphs (1) through (3).

"Natural hair braiding" does not include:

(1) The application of dyes, reactive chemicals, or other preparations to:

(A) Alter the color of hair; or

(B) Straighten, curl, or alter the structure of hair; or

(2) The use of chemical hair joining agents including synthetic tape, keratin bonds, or fusion bonds."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: _____

S.B. NO. 2876

Report Title:
Board of Barbering and Cosmetology; Natural Hair Braiding; License; Exemption

Description:
Exempts natural hair braiders from licensing requirements under certain conditions.

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