

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0550

March 25, 2021

Ms. Kristy Underwood
Executive Officer, State Board of Barbering & Cosmetology
2420 Del Paso Rd #100
Sacramento, CA 95834

Dear Ms. Underwood:

I am writing as a follow-up to my March 4 letter to Governor Newsom requesting the State of California craft an immediate and comprehensive solution to the cosmetology licensing exam backlog that it alone is responsible for clearing.

As you know, due to extended and numerous pandemic lockdowns and restrictions placed on beauty colleges, salons and even the Board's functions, aspiring personal care professionals have been placed in extended limbo awaiting the opportunity to complete their state licensing exam. Without the completion of mandates by the Board, they are unable to provide for their families, pay off school loans, or practice as a licensed professional. This failure has caused 7,000 graduates to wait months for the state to schedule what it has an obligation to provide.

I am aware that following my recent visit to the El Cajon Bellus Academy to hear from impacted graduates, some have received testing dates. Further, I understand that earlier testing dates have been offered, cutting months of wait time. This is important progress, and it is appreciated. I urge the Board to go further, however, and announce additional efforts to provide a more stable solution for all who are waiting and those that will soon graduate and add to the queue.

Multiple states have implemented virtual testing and temporary licensing requirements, which I understand you may be evaluating. The fact is that California is significantly behind other states that implemented solutions months ago, so I urge the Board to act with expediency. Further, I note that the state has adjusted testing requirements for doctors, nurses, and lawyers during the pandemic response. I am confident if safety can be assured with adjustments for these trades, a workable solution can be achieved here as well.

I request an update on the actions the Board will take to alleviate this challenge. Thank you in advance for your work on behalf of these students.

Regards,



Darrell Issa
Member of Congress