

To the Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

My name is Leticia Martinez, I have been a licensed Cosmetologist since 2004. Having been a stay-at-home mom for 5 years I wanted to get into skincare. Having a license in Cosmetology is within my scope and would not need any additional license. However, I did not feel I had the knowledge to successfully treat clients in skincare. I made the sacrifice to enroll in Johnson County Community College's Esthetic program and became a licensed Esthetician in 2018. I am dual licensed in both the state of Kansas and hold a Cosmetology license in the state of Missouri. I am the owner of Sugar Skin Studio, in Overland Park, KS. I am also a certified educator for Tamara's Sugar.

I am submitting my testimony Opposing Bill SB434.

Sugar hair removal is listed under the scope of Cosmetology and Esthetics for a reason. It is not merely just removing hair. Sugar paste attaches to dead skin cells along with the hair. It exfoliates while it removes hair from the hair follicle. Hearing dead skin cells may make you think it will not cause damage, but given every person's skin is different there are many circumstances we must take into account. Skin is our largest organ, that is where being educated in Cosmetology &/or Esthetics and obtaining a license is a necessity while we serve our community in a safe and knowledgeable manner.

In both Cosmetology and Esthetics schooling the first thing we learn is disinfection, sanitation, and the dangers of cross-contamination. We are pounded with the knowledge of how we as providers can easily transmit disease if we do not properly handle our tools and clients with the utmost seriousness. That may be the longest subject in our book next to skin physiology.

Without the proper knowledge of disinfection and sanitation, you could easily infect the public with ringworm, herpes, hepatitis, AIDS, and now we have Covid-19. In this world today new diseases are popping up. This type of contamination could kill someone. Why is the community's well-being not worth one year of education and a state licensing test? This industry takes cleanliness as seriously as a healthcare provider. We are taught a blood spill procedure and are required to have a blood spill kit in our treatment rooms and salons at all times. We will be fined if we are inspected and do not have one. That was created for all the reasons I just stated.

We hope to never have to use our blood spill kit. Situations do happen. On Feb 21, 2024, I was performing a Sugar Brazilian. That is removing hair from the pubic region and anal region. My client had a single hair on her outer labia that wasn't removed with the sugar paste. My client has dehydrated skin, so being trained to identify that, I chose to pluck the hair instead of going over with paste again which could potentially lift her skin. Once I plucked the single hair, the follicle began to bleed as if she had a wound. I immediately began my blood spill procedure and protected my client and myself in the process. Blood is a biohazard and is required to be disposed of properly and efficiently. Everyone was safe, my client was handled with care, that is why we are called licensed professionals.

We are educated in skin anatomy and physiology which are the fundamentals of Esthetics. Being capable of analyzing and recognizing different skin types, skin conditions, skin diseases, contraindications, etc. Clients could potentially have skin cancer and not being aware of it, the different types of moles someone has and sugaring over them could cause extra harm. Understanding that some skin types are not suitable at all for hair removal, whether it be waxing or sugaring. Understanding that some medications cause thinning of the skin. Not all customers disclose their medications, we are trained to immediately identify an adverse reaction to the skin. People suffer from ingrown hairs or cysts, and removing that you may be exposed to pus or fluids. Knowing when and when not to remove it, It could spread bacteria under the dermis, which could affect the clients skin further. As licensed professionals, our client's safety is our number one priority.

Sugaring is an art. It takes time to learn to properly attach, mold, and flick the hair off. It is required to sugar for over a year consistently and submit videos of my technique before being considered for the position of an Educator. Without proper training, you can bruise clients, lift skin, and cause unnecessary pain while molding. Not to mention the prevention of cross-contamination. As an educator, I help other licensed professionals grow their businesses and succeed in an ever-growing industry. You cannot order sugar without becoming certified in sugar hair removal. You cannot become certified without holding a license in Cosmetology or Esthetics. Every reputable Sugaring company will only sell to licensed professionals, for all the reasons stated above.

While the consumer has the right to purchase a sugaring kit or waxing kit and perform it on oneself, they assume the risk just as a person using a home hair dye kit would. You are not posing as a professional and charging for the service. This would belittle the hair removal scope protected previously by the states education requirements and assurance that proper education keeps the community safe as a Kansas registered business. It would be the same as if you were charging a consumer for a haircut or barbering without understanding the processes to keep the consumer safe.

Our community as a whole is deserving to be serviced by professionals who make the commitment to get educated and licensed in our industry. We remove hair from the entire body. We remove hair from intimate private areas. We build trust and always provide a safe space for our clients. It would be a total disservice to our community to deregulate Sugaring. Our community has been through so much sickness during the world-altering pandemic, leaving this in the hands of an unlicensed unprofessional is not evolving towards growth. It is taking steps back and could potentially cause harm to a community that needs safety and peace of mind.

Keeping Sugar Hair removal regulated is the only way we can achieve this and keep our community safe.

Thank you committee for your time and understanding.
Leticia Martinez