

Public Health Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3000  
Hartford, CT 06106

February 21, 2015

Honorable members of the Public Health Committee,

I am writing to implore you to vote against proposed Bill # 5625, "AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFINITION OF SURGERY", introduced by Representative Srinivasan. The redefinition of the word surgery will have negative impacts to the people of Connecticut in the following ways:

- This bill will put approximately 3,000 licensed electrologists, permanent makeup, and tattoo professionals out of business, negatively impacting small businesses and the taxes they provide to the State of Connecticut.
- The general public will be negatively impacted by the lack of available experienced licensed cosmetic professionals who practice electrolysis and permanent cosmetics.
- This bill is unfairly biased to an industry (cosmetic professionals) primarily populated and patroned by women.

The wording of this law, as currently written, categorizes permanent cosmetics and tattoos as surgical procedures. I believe the majority of us would agree that these professions are not commensurate with the nature of surgery. If this bill is left unchanged, it will bar professionals from working in this field all together. The elimination of a population of experienced and licensed professionals in this industry will negatively impact your constituency, the people of Connecticut, by limiting their access to the services we provide. A large portion of our clientele greatly benefit from the services, and the loss of such a large population of experienced professionals will force them to seek treatment alternatives out of state, or not at all.

Permanent cosmetics, also known as cosmetic tattooing or permanent makeup, involves permanent pigment tattooed into the skin. Most professionals would categorize this procedure as non-invasive, as the skin is only minimally affected during the tattoo procedure. The goal of permanent cosmetics, in contrast to traditional tattoos, is to correct any anomalies in a woman's/man's appearance. For example, recreating the lost tail end of an eyebrow, that may have been lost through cancer surgery, a thyroid condition or alopecia which can be partial or complete hair loss on the body.

Permanent cosmetics is not limited to eyebrows and eyeliner; it is becoming more widely used for areola re-pigmentation (tattooing) after breast reconstructive surgery, as well as scar camouflage and other paramedical applications. In many cases, areola re-pigmentation is the final step in a woman's battle with breast cancer. To prolong this final step would be incredibly demoralizing to a woman who has waited and fought so long to return to life and normality. Many women may simply give up and never complete reconstruction. Areola tattooing is a gentle procedure that does not require the involvement of medical professionals to be successful. If we can provide more availability to women by allowing permanent cosmetic professionals to practice independently, we can make this final step easier for breast cancer survivors.

This small clause will negatively impact thousands of women (both clients and professionals) and make permanent cosmetic services widely unavailable in Connecticut. I am asking you to deeply consider the impact that this regulation has on the availability of services to women, on job opportunities for women, and on permanent makeup and medical industries. If permanent cosmetics is categorized under surgical procedures in Connecticut, the opportunities in this area will be lost. Women who may have been employed or own their own businesses may need government support to survive. This simple clause could potentially put hundreds of women in Connecticut out of business.

Permanent Cosmetics is a licensed industry in the State of Connecticut. Among the requirements prior to licensing is a requisite 2,000 hours of apprenticeship, including Infection Control and Blood borne pathogens, CPR and First Aid. In 2012, 37% of permanent makeup artists came from a cosmetology background, 30% came from skin care backgrounds, and 33% were made up of manicurists, tattoo artists, and other creative fields. Many are divorcees, single mothers, and work multiple jobs in the beauty industry to support their families. Statistics from the Society of Permanent Cosmetic Professionals support this statement; 95% of all permanent cosmetic professionals are women, and 44% work as sole proprietors in their business.

Permanent makeup performed in an office provides an accessible, non-hospital related environment for women to have their beauty needs met. As you can imagine, there are many artistic nuances and details to consider during a permanent cosmetic procedure. Women need the opportunity to be able to discuss these details with a professional of their choosing. Women also need equal opportunities to become permanent cosmetic professionals in Connecticut, if they so choose.

I have worked with doctors from all over the state of Connecticut. In fact, 90% of my referrals are from Plastic Surgeons. Permanent Cosmetic makeup picks up where the doctors leave off.

When they have completed the real surgery of restructuring, altering bone, tissue and/or of adding prosthetics, my job begins with the Cosmetic finishing touches and enhancements.

I have worked extensively in this sector for well over 15 years, and have formed a well respected reputation in the industry. The portfolios of the experience professionals in this field speak for themselves as we have changed the lives of thousands of women. Cosmetic tattooing is a gentle, non-invasive process that should not be placed in the same category as surgery. Please do not limit the opportunities of female artists and professionals in Connecticut; please do not pass this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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