

My testimony for Raised H.B. NO. 5171 Session Year 2016

House Republican Leader Themis Klarides has put forth a bill to the higher education committee to create a graduated fee schedule for private occupational schools. I ask that you please consider supporting this bill.

Private occupational schools are currently required to pay \$40,000 to the state in a licensing fee. **Example: Branford Hall \$16,000.00 tuition for nine months of daily classes, \$40,000.00 fee.** I am aware that this is intended to cover the cost of any claims for refunds, however, the fee is not appropriate for all organizations. There is a difference between an actual "School" and an organization that may offer a smaller diploma or training taking less time and costing less in terms of tuition and or consulting fees.

The purpose of the bill is to help smaller programs that charge only \$99.00 -\$2500 for participants pay an amount that is more reflective of the cost of the educational experience they provide.

My name is Dave Parise I am founder of Results Plus Inc. Since 1986 I have been servicing the general community in regards to proper exercise and healthy eating. I am writing for support in regards to the Dept. of Higher education laws and guidelines for schools.

Several years ago a local facility asked if I would train one of their staff members. They had some liability issues with injuries and were interested in having me provide training to some of their staff. I did this as a "consultant" and charged them an hourly wage for my time. This lead into more referrals, and local facilities were sending an employee per month. A number of the students expressed their thanks on social media platforms. They would post videos and special thank you notes. Several months later, I was getting emails from trainers, all of whom employed, inquiring about continuing education credits. The emails were from Greece, Canada, Australia, Texas, CT, and New York. These trainers traveled from their residence and stayed in a local hotel near my center. I wanted to keep a high standard so I registered with the National Academy of Sports Medicine. I was approved and licensed #540 as a National Education Provider. I was able to award continuing education credits, and a diploma of completion. (To validate their 1.4 Cec's) They requested that I form a company, and granted permission to use the NASM name as an education provider under their umbrella. I formed a company called Fit-Pros Academy. However the industry did not really understand the word "Academy". (They thought it was a school) The buzz in the industry was "Personal Training School" I use the name "school" in my domain name so search engines will find me and spread the word regarding my consulting business. This was based on SEO Search engine optimization and key words that search engines look for. The reality is that I am not a school, I am a consultant and a one man show. I only teach safety standards, and laws that pertain to standard of care. Without the name "school" in my domain I would not get referrals. That is the industry no-one needs consulting once certified.

- Fit-Pros does not have a set schedule for participants

- The employee / subject makes their own hours. We both agree on a specific time, and that can change.
- The fee is based on what the employee can afford ranges from 500.00 to 2500.00
- No financial aid
- No scholarships
- No Syllabus
- No text book for employee
- No class room
- Never worked with more than 1-person at a time
- I administer NO test, no scores
- Every referral is already certified, and working, no job placement.

This is not my primary business, but rather a consultative training program, and or mentorship that is arranged on an as needed basis.

The Department of Higher Education had a few complaints from trainers in my area that I was running a school. **Understanding that my longevity (30) years in the industry can intimidate other trainers in this area.** On one particular face-to face meeting with the D.H.E. I was told to pay 40,000.00 so I could run my school. *This was overwhelming*, I don't have a school, and a fee that I could not afford based upon the cost and fees for the program. It is not a "profitable business" but rather something I am passionate about. Explaining safety standards, correct training methods is important to me and therefore I charge only based upon my time and expenses to provide the individual with what they need, or their employer requests. I teach how to avoid negligence and stay within the Guidelines of the health and fitness facility standards. Often times I will provide filming and hire an outside source with the fee paid by the participant. (Lost revenue) This is a great way the participant can remember the message for the day.

\*\*\*\*\*There are so many offering and teaching skills. There are over 200 classes on the internet that do what I do. There are 50+ in CT alone from cooking to learning social media marketing. This fact leads me to ask if the DHE will close everyone down who cannot pay the 40,000 fee. Great for the economy? If a kitchen store offers a "cooking class" for six weeks and charges a small fee, \$99.00 but only does this a few months a year will you shut them down, and will they pay \$40,000.00? Not all skills / mentorship/ educational programs fit the same mold.

We need to define "School" it's not always about learning a skill. Therefore, I am hopeful that you will re-examine the fees and the definitions you use in identifying a "School". The State could benefit greatly from gathering more information and having a graduated fee schedule that makes sense based upon what the business really is. The state should agree on no fee for the non-schools and or smaller consultants like myself.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to further discussions with you on this matter.

Dave Parise CPT