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RYAN D. FECTEAU
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

May 6, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF SPEAKER RYAN D. FECTEAU REGARDING LD 1861, AN ACT
TO REQUIRE TRAINING ON TEXTURED HAIR FOR AESTHETICIANS, BARBER
HAIR STYLISTS, COSMETOLOGISTS AND HAIR DESIGNERS**

Good afternoon, Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor. I am Speaker Ryan Fecteau and I am proud to represent part of Biddeford, District 11, and serve as Speaker in the Maine House.

I am pleased to support LD 1861, *An Act to Require Training on Textured Hair for Aestheticians, Barber Hair Stylists, Cosmetologists and Hair Designers*.

This bill is straightforward, but is important for its inclusivity and for its protection of public health.

Right now, many hair stylists graduate and become licensed without ever having been trained to work with curly or textured hair. Hair plays an important role in an individual's identity, and while people from all walks of life can have textured hair, in some communities it also holds important cultural significance. This lack of training leaves stylists unable to serve their customers and it leaves the customers feeling demoralized and undervalued because we, as a state, didn't value their needs enough to include them in training materials for stylists. Even more troubling, though, are the potential health consequences to this improper training. Textured or curly hair can actually fall out if it is pulled too tightly or for too long – or if it is over processed or otherwise damaged.

LD 1861 solves this problem by simply requiring stylist curriculum to include training on textured hair. The bill does not mandate how this is done and therefore leaves it up to the department to do at its own discretion. It does not invalidate existing licenses, or require more credit hours, or require a change to the testing – simply that training must include textured or curly hair in some way.

Maine often leads the way, but in this case we could be joining a growing list of other states that have passed similar legislation, including: Louisiana, New York, Connecticut, Minnesota, California, and – within the last week- Washington State. I understand Vermont and New Jersey have similar legislation pending.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you support LD 1861. Thank you for your time – I would be happy to address any questions you may have.