

## Economics Matters Committee

To whom it may concern,

My name is Katty Joof and I am writing to express my strong support for the establishment of a Limited Lash License SB617/ HB1223 in the state of Maryland. As a lash artist and business owner of 5 years in the state of Maryland, I am deeply concerned about the potential requirement for lash artists to attend esthetician or cosmetology school, which is not only unnecessary for our profession but also creates significant financial and educational barriers for individuals who wish to specialize in eyelash extensions only.

Lash artistry is a highly specialized field that does not require the full scope of training provided in esthetics or cosmetology programs. These programs focus primarily on skincare, hair, and waxing, with little to no instruction on eyelash extensions. Many of the schools I've contacted do not have lash extensions in their curriculum. Requiring lash artists to complete hundreds of unrelated training hours places an undue burden on professionals who are already skilled and trained through independent lash certification programs.

Several other states, including Texas, Minnesota, and Indiana, have recognized the need for a separate lash license, allowing lash artists to practice legally without unnecessary and unrelated coursework. Implementing a similar Limited Lash License in Maryland would:

- Ensure Proper Regulation & Safety – By creating a lash-specific license, Maryland can establish health and safety standards tailored to the industry, ensuring that clients receive services from trained and certified lash professionals.
- Support Small Business Owners – Many lash artists are independent business owners who rely on their craft to make a living. Forcing them into unrelated schooling would financially burden existing and aspiring lash artists, limiting economic opportunities.

- Encourage Industry Growth – A dedicated lash license would help regulate and legitimize the profession while allowing Maryland to keep pace with other states that have already recognized the need for this licensing.

Lash artists in Maryland should have a legal and accessible pathway to certification without being forced into programs that do not align with our field. I urge the state to consider the implementation of a Limited Lash License under the approval of the Maryland state board of cosmetology to protect and support the growing lash industry while maintaining professional standards.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further and contribute to the development of an appropriate licensing program for lash artists in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Katty Joof

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