

In support of Bill H 5833

Dear Honorable Members of the House Committee:

My name is **Kerri Cassino**, my testimony today is in favor for, **bill H5833** because I believe it will benefit the neurodiverse community, as well as my own child.

I have a daughter who has Non-Verbal Autism and lots of sensory processing issues, especially at a salon, while getting a haircut.

A haircut became a daunting task and a complete meltdown.

I am sure you can remember the last time you got a haircut. The sounds of hairdryers, smells like a perm/hairspray and wearing a cape to keep the hair off your clothes...

This is all part of how we take care of ourselves, maybe even, feel like we are treating ourselves.

This simple service of a haircut is **not** simple for our children and adults who are neurodiverse.

A haircut was a traumatic experience for my daughter.

Other concerning factors at the salon, include, my daughter would also scare other children with her screams of terror, we would become center of attention and require more adult, hands on to be safe.

The Sensory Stylist has found a way to help people who have sensory processing difficulties; a way to get a haircut in the comfort of their home. ***As it stands today R.I. law does not allow for haircutting in the home, for this reason, like our neighboring states. (Massachusetts and Connecticut)***

The passage of **Bill H 5833** will provide a solid framework to allow for not only just children and adults who are neurodiverse, but also accommodate those who use mobility scooters, wheelchairs, canes and lift **THE invisible barriers** for those diagnosed with anxiety and depression.

In closing, The Sensory Stylist has found a way to adapt a new business model to accommodate this “new culture that is emerging” and reach neurodiverse populations. Also providing dignity to have a haircut without a meltdown.

The Sensory Stylist shared, by email, to all committee members, letters of support and has ¹⁰⁰ customer satisfaction.

Along with, Media Coverage from East-Bay Media and NBC 10 News:

<https://www.eastbayri.com/portsmouth/portsmouth/portsmouth/portsmouth/stories/where-theres-a-will-theres-not-a-way,128751>,

The Neurodiverse population is steadily increasing, and **BILL H 5833**, allows for a pathway to create more ways to foster change, inclusion, and acceptance.

Thank you for your time today.

Kerri Cassino / 10 Heritage Cir. Johnston RI 02919 / 508.942.0561