

To whom this may concern:

My name is Jessica De La Luz, and I am a Dual Credit Cosmetology Instructor at Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde, TX. To you all, making the decision to end the need for an Instructor license, may be a statistical one or a financial even... but let me be one of many voices to stress the importance of keeping it.

Three years ago, I was just a cosmetologist. I had just buried a daughter, let go of my job and was in a world of despair. I thought I had nothing to offer the world, the industry, or myself. A friend and former cosmetology teacher mentioned getting my instructor license to "keep me busy". Little did she know that this would be the thing to save my life.

Yes, having something to do distracted me, but what I gained was purpose. Having something to strive for helped me find new meaning. Teaching, became my passion. Now, I know by now you must be thinking that the program would still be available, only the need for a license would be removed. But, let me say this... if you remove the need for the license, you INVALIDATE what it means to be an educator. You would say to those of us who put in the effort to become educators, that we wasted our time.

The license is more than just a piece of paper. Its accomplishment! Its blood, sweat and tears! And for many, especially in my case, its my life. Now, if facts are what you need then look at your data. You see that in 2019, 90% of the people who took the instructor exam, passed. That means you held 266 people to the standard of education we urge to see from our students.

WE, set the example for the professionals we set out into the industry. And for that, we must also be held accountable to the same level of commitment and training. So, I ask you, COMMIT TO US. Commit to people like me, who without that "piece of paper", probably wouldn't be here.

Thank you,

Jessica De La Luz