



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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# **New Association Finds Legislative Success**

**Tallahassee, FL –**

The newly formed Florida Association of Beauty Professionals' (FAB Professionals) aggressive stance and lobbying efforts against HB 177/SB 920 resulted in a VETO by Governor Charlie Crist! During the 2007 legislative session FAB Professionals was directed by their Executive Committee and members to lobby against HB 117/SB 920 -- a bill that would have dramatically increased educational requirements for cosmetologists, created 3 additional licenses, introduced an ill-defined internship program, and removed fee caps through modified language.

While FAB Professionals agrees changes should occur in the industry, HB 117/SB 920, which made it through the House and the Senate on its 4<sup>th</sup> year attempt, was full of problems. "We made an effort to work with the group responsible for the bill but after meeting in November 2006, decided we would have to maintain a separate agenda," said Moriah Murphy, Co-Executive Director of FAB Professionals.

FAB Professionals rallied after session to inform the Governor's Office of the problems with the bill. Governor Charlie Crist vetoed SB 920/HB 117, *An act relating to cosmetology*, citing too much regulation without a justifiable need and called the measure "overly burdensome" that would have a negative impact on peoples' livelihoods.

"Many salon owners, current licensees and cosmetology school owners couldn't agree more", stated Rick Wallace, Co-Executive Director of FAB Professionals. "This industry has gone un-represented for many years. We must seize this opportunity to pull together and work for the common good of all".

The bill's supporters touted this as a bill designed to protect the public, yet the majority of current violations result from disregard for current laws and unlicensed activity. According to FAB Professionals, this would have hurt, rather than helped the public.

In addition to increasing hours the bill introduced an internship program which would have allowed unlicensed individuals to work on the public. This aspect, coupled with the increased difficulty in getting through school and obtaining a license could result in a spike in unlicensed activity.

"We want to address the issue of education in Florida but we must first look at our current curriculum and who is doing the instruction. Increasing hours above the national standard and not looking into a certification for instructors just does not make sense!", said Wallace. FAB Professionals has the support of the Florida Cosmetology School Association and talks are underway to combine the two associations.

"We commend Governor Crist's decision to veto this bill and his understanding of the hardship it would cause," said LaRae Narkinski, FAB Professionals Executive Committee member and co-owner of Tre'L Salon in Tallahassee.

FAB Professionals will be attending the Premiere Hair Show in Orlando June 10 and 11, 2007 and will have a booth so the industry can begin building a position for the future. Florida's cosmetology industry is comprised of more than 18,000 licensed salons and spas, 200,000 individuals, and over 8,000 new licensees annually. Wallace states, "Not only does this industry have a vital place in Florida's economy representing more than \$2 billion in annual sales, but no other industry has the personal connection to the public like cosmetologists. Everyone gets their hair cut and many develop a strong bond with their stylists."

*FAB Professionals is a non-profit trade association based in Tallahassee representing the professionally licensed cosmetology and barbering industry, including cosmetology schools and students. Launched in late 2006 by Rick Wallace and Moriah Murphy, co-owners of FAMOS, LLC, a professional association management company, FAB Professionals is governed by a volunteer board of directors consisting of industry professionals. For more information please contact FAB at 850-580-4064.*

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