

Post-Election Professional Licensing Findings

Currently, licensing for hair stylists, barbers, nail technicians, and estheticians is very popular. More than nine in ten (94%) 2012 general election voters say they support requiring licenses, including 97% of Democrats, 92% of Republicans, and 92% of independent voters. Voters say that professional licenses protect the public as well as improve quality and safety. While support is very broad, the strongest support is from women, older voters, African Americans, and voters with low household income.

To the degree there is room to improve, it's important to stress the public health benefits from licensing. While voters know that becoming a hair stylist, barber, or a related profession requires attending cosmetology school and passing a test, the public does not currently see the connection to public health issues like lice and scalp disease as strongly as other requirements. Our findings suggest the most compelling message focuses on how licensing ensures proper sanitation and cleanliness. Over two in three (67%) voters said the message was very compelling, including voters of all political affiliations and ages. The best way to talk about the benefits of professional licensing is below:

Voters believe licensing requires education; less aware about skills, public health benefits

Four in five (80%) 2012 presidential election voters say that stylist, barber, nail technician, or esthetician has to attend school in order to receive a license. Three in four (74%) voters say that learning proper techniques for handling tools and chemicals is a requirement, including 86% of African American voters. Voters were least likely to know that training in preventing the spread of disease was necessary, though almost three in five (59%) did identify it as a requirement.

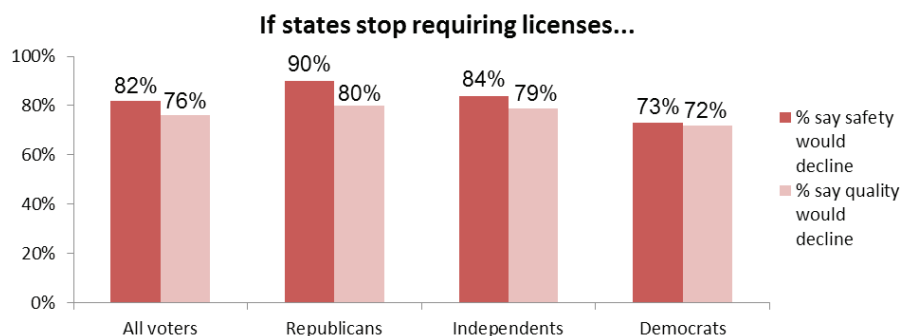
Public thinks safety and quality would decline with law change

The vast majority of voters say quality and safety would decline if states ended licensing professions like hair stylists, barbers, nail technicians and estheticians. More than four in five (82%) say safety would decline and more than three in four (76%) voters say quality would decline without licensing.

Older voters and women are the most concerned demographic groups. Among 50+ voters, 88% say safety will go down and 91% say quality will decline. Among female voters, 87% say it will be less safe and 81% say quality will go down.

Younger voters are relatively more skeptical that ending licensing would impact safety and quality than older voters. Without licensing, six in ten (62%) voters under 35, say that quality would decline and nearly seven in ten (69%) say quality would decline.

As shown in the graph below, these concerns are held by voters of all political persuasions, with strong majorities of Republicans, independents and Democrats saying the procedures will be less safe and lower quality.



More African Americans say safety would decline (82%) than quality would decline (53%). Hispanics are the reverse, with more saying quality would decline (73%) than safety (56%). White voters are more likely to expect quality (83%) and safety (85%) to decline than either Hispanics or African Americans.

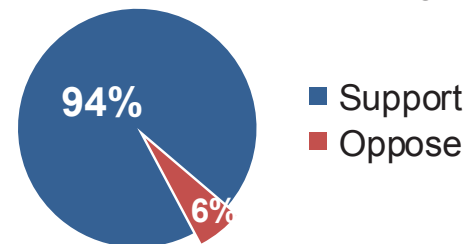
Voters see benefit of licensing

More than nine in ten (94%) voters say they support requiring their stylist, barber, nail technician or esthetician to be licensed. This is a bi-partisan policy with 97% of Democrats, 92% of Republicans, and 92% of independents supporting licensing.

While support for licensing is widespread, there are differences in intensity. Nearly three in four (73%) older voters strongly support licensing, compared to just three in five (60%) voters under 35. Voters with household income under \$30,000 per year (72% strongly support) are also stronger supporters of licensing than voters with household incomes over \$75,000 (64% strongly support).

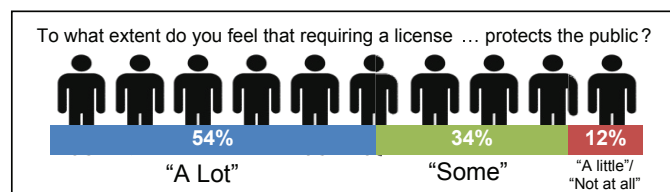
The strongest support is from African Americans (79% strongly support), women (76% strongly support) and Democrats (74% strongly support).

Widespread support for professional licensing



Public sees benefit to professional licensing

Nearly eight in nine (88%) voters say that requiring a license protects the public either "a lot" or "some". A majority of voters (54%) believe that state licensing helps protect the public a lot.



Best messages focus on front-line prevention of diseases and safety

The best pro-licensing message focuses on how professional licensing ensures cleanliness and sanitation and enables professionals to identify scalp diseases, head lice, and other public health concerns. Over two in three (67%) voters said the message was very compelling.

Of the three pro-licensing messages PSB tested, the cleanliness message was the most effective among women and men, though it was more effective with women (77% very compelling) than men (54% very compelling). It was equally effective with voters of all political affiliations and ages. The full message is below:

Professional licensing and inspections help ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation practices in hair salons and spas. In addition, most states require training in properly identifying scalp diseases, head lice, and other ailments.

Methodology

The results are taken from the 2012 Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) National Post-Election Study. The study was conducted online from November 9-10, 2012 among n=1,202 Americans who voted in the 2012 presidential election. The margin of error for the study is +/- 2.83% at the 95% confidence level and larger for subgroups. Certain questions were split sampled to reduce respondent fatigue.