



TO: The Honorable Members of the PA House State Government Committee
FROM: Alex Halper, VP, Government Affairs
DATE: June 20, 2023
RE: Concerns with HB 1394 as currently drafted

On behalf of the PA Chamber, I write to express concern with H.B. 1394, as currently drafted, to expand the PA Human Relations Act. The committee is scheduled to consider the bill today.

This legislation, known as the “Crown Act” is intended to prohibit “discrimination based on a person's hair type, hair texture or hairstyle,” according to the cosponsor memo. The bill, however, is much broader and covers all “traits historically associated with race.”

This language, while no doubt well-intended, sets a confusing standard that is open to broad interpretation and could lead to unintended consequences including unfounded claims against employers.

We respectfully suggest the committee amend the bill to focus on its stated purpose of prohibiting discrimination against hairstyles commonly associated with one’s race. Additionally, we suggest language protecting the right of employers to enforce health and safety policies. Employers in manufacturing, healthcare, food preparation and other industries often maintain important health and safety policies that relate to employee grooming standards and this legislation should not inadvertently complicate enforcement of legitimate policies.

Thank you for considering our views on this important matter. Please contact Alex Halper at ahalper@pachamber.org or 717-645-8730 with questions or to discuss.