

The Wisconsin Policy Research Institute: Barber, UW student to explain how licensure stymies their startups

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Michael Jahr, vice president of outreach and special projects at the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, will testify Thursday, Aug. 24, on the need for professional licensing reform at a joint public hearing conducted by the Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations and the Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform. The hearing is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. in the Capitol in Room 411 South.

Testifying with Jahr will be Albert Walker, a Green Bay ex-con-turned-barber who cuts the hair of – and even mentors – some of the Green Bay Packers. Walker nearly lost his barber lounge as a result of an onerous and redundant licensing requirement.

Jahr will also be joined by Samuel Haack, a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison whose idea for an Uber-like, on-demand barbering business is stymied by the state's licensing regulations.

The committees are considering legislation that would create an Occupational License Review Council within the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS). The council would be required to submit a report by Dec. 31, 2018, that

includes recommendations for the elimination of occupational licenses, or modifying the laws and rules governing occupational licenses, and for the reduction or elimination of occupational license continuing education requirements.

The other bill under consideration by the committees would require DSPS to establish and maintain an electronic self-certification registry that allows individuals certified by state-approved supporting organizations to apply to use the title “state certified” in conjunction with their practice.

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