

ASSEMBLY CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND REGULATED
PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2546

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 12, 1997

The Assembly Consumer Affairs and Regulated Professions Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2546.

This bill provides for the licensing of tattoo artists and body piercing artists. It establishes a five-member "Tattooing and Body Piercing Advisory Committee" in the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety, under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Medical Examiners. The committee is to consist of five members: two physicians, one tattoo artist, one body piercing artist, and one public member who will represent consumer interests. The committee will advise the Board of Medical Examiners regarding standards of practice, licensing qualifications, tattooing and body piercing education programs and inspections of the offices of tattoo and body piercing artists.

To be eligible for a tattoo artist's or body piercing artist's license, an applicant must be at least 18 years old, of good moral character, and have obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent. Each applicant must also have successfully completed a tattoo or body piercing education program, as the case may be. Additionally, applicants must pass an examination administered or approved by the Board of Medical Examiners.

"Tattooing" is defined in the bill as the insertion of pigment under the surface of the skin of a person by pricking with a needle or otherwise, to produce an indelible mark or figure visible through the skin. "Body piercing" is defined in the bill as the creation of an opening in the body of a human being for the purpose of inserting jewelry or other decoration and includes, but is not limited to, piercing of an ear, lip, tongue, nose or eyebrow. "Body piercing" does not mean piercing an ear with a disposable single-use stud or solid needle that is applied using a mechanical device to force the needle or stud through the ear.

The bill prohibits anyone from practicing tattooing or body piercing or using the titles "licensed tattoo artist" or "licensed body piercing artist" or any other title, designation, words, letters, abbreviations or insignia indicating the practice of tattooing or body piercing unless duly licensed. The bill further provides that nothing in

the act shall be construed to prohibit any person licensed to practice in this State under any other law from engaging in the practice for which he is licensed.

In addition, the bill stipulates that no person shall operate a tattooing or body piercing office without obtaining an office license under the act. The bill further provides that the Board of Medical Examiners shall set minimum criteria for the operation and physical premises of offices, and may inspect offices.

Applicants who apply for licensure within 180 days of the bill's effective date may be granted a license without sitting for an examination under certain circumstances.