



Another Great Moment in Local Government

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It's no secret that I have very little faith in the competence and good will of government.

I focus primarily on the [fecklessness of Washington](#), but I also can't resist highlighting malfeasance and stupidity by local governments, state governments, and foreign governments.

Indeed, I've even had to create special categories to keep track of some of the more amazing episodes of bureaucratic blundering. Here are just a few that will leave you shaking your head in disbelief.

A [bizarre collection of examples showing anti-gun political correctness](#) in schools.

A [local government stupidity contest](#).

A bunch of [supposed victories](#) in the Drug War.

A [comparison of government stupidity](#) in the United States and United Kingdom.

A list of [new "rights" concocted by governments](#).

A [pick-the-dumbest-regulation](#) poll.

And even [a strange collection](#) of stories about anti-Bambi persecution by bureaucrats.

Today, we're going to add to this collection. But I'm not sure how to categorize this story. Is it a great moment in local law enforcement, like when [cops bust little girls](#) with lemonade stands, or they arrest young men for [the horrible crime of saving people from drowning](#)?

Or is it an example of the regulatory state run amok, like when the FDA [conducted a raid](#) to stop consenting adults from buying and selling unpasteurized milk, or when the Greek bureaucracy [required submission of stool samples](#) in order to set up an online company.

You'll understand why it's hard to decide after reading this story. The issue is (gasp!) unregulated topless hair cutting. Here's some of what [was reported](#) by the *New York Times*.

A woman who allegedly offered topless hairstyling services in northern Colorado faces criminal charges. But police say the problem isn't cutting hair without a top. ...46-year old Suzette Hall was arrested Wednesday night on suspicion of practicing cosmetology without a license.

I don't know about you, but I'm going to sleep better tonight knowing that the dangerous scourge of unlicensed haircutting in Colorado has been stifled.

Aren't we lucky that the government is protecting us from such dangers!

Interestingly, the Rebel Barber (who is not the same person as [the Rebel Economist](#)) actually tried to comply with the government's regulatory demands. But there was no license for her particular form of business.

Hall's ex-husband told police she set up shop in Loveland and offered services as "Rebel Barber." He told police she applied for "a nude license for hairstylists," but no such license exists.

Perhaps we can get some federal legislation requiring all states to have new bureaucracies for the purposes of licensing and regulating nude hairstylists?

Actually, I shouldn't even make that kind of joke. Some politician might take the suggestion seriously.

Better to leave such matters in the hands of local governments. That way, the potential damage is limited by borders.

Speaking of which, the politicians of Snohomish County in Washington have [created special licensing rules for adult coffees shops](#).

Though that's amateur hour compared to the Germans, who have figured out [how to use parking meters](#) to tax prostitutes.

In other words, governments don't mind sex so long as they can figure out how to regulate it or tax it.

P.S. The [all-time record for government incompetence](#) was set by Fall River, Massachusetts in 2011.

P.P.S. As you might imagine, Dave Barry is very funny when [he decides to mock government](#).