



Connecticut Business & Industry Association

**Testimony of Kia F. Murrell
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Before the Committee on Labor and Public Employees
Hartford, CT
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**H.B. 6461 AAC Workers' Compensation and the
Wastewater Treatment Facility Operator Certification**

Good Afternoon chairs and members of the Committee, I am Kia Murrell of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA represents more than 10,000 companies throughout the state of Connecticut.

We believe that **H.B. 6461 AAC Workers' Compensation and the Wastewater Treatment Facility Operator Certification** would undermine the competency and qualifications of wastewater treatment facilities operators who, pursuant to this legislation, are allowed to become certified despite not having worked sufficient hours or received sufficient training to be certified. Therefore, we oppose this legislation.

H.B. 6461 amends Section 1. Section 22a-416 of the Connecticut General Statutes to provide that:

(e) An individual employed as a wastewater treatment facility operator prior to January 1, 2005, who was unable to attain class IV certification, as described in subsection (d) of this section, between January 1, 2004, and January 1, 2010, as a result of a compensable injury under chapter 568, shall be granted class IV certification by the commissioner.

This legislation creates a retroactive exception in the wastewater operator certification for workers receiving workers' compensation during the certification training process. Basically, it allows individuals awaiting certification to obtain credit towards their certification for time during which they were out of work due to a workers compensation injury.

The legislation could also set a dangerous precedent for other trades and occupations that rely upon training hours or a certification process to ensure that their workforce is competent in the field.

It is important for the businesses who employ wastewater treatment facility operators know that the operators are sufficiently trained and qualified for their jobs. **To allow people to become certified without actually working the requisite hours needed for certification undermines both their ability and the core competencies of the certification process.** Once that occurs, both the businesses that employ those operators and the public that relies upon their skills could pay a high price for this legislation. For all of the reasons stated above, we **oppose** this legislation.