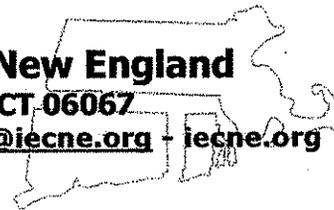




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**TESTIMONY
LISA HUTNER
INDEPENDENT ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS OF NEW ENGLAND
BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 10, 2009**

RE: SB-849, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE LAWS

The Independent Electrical Contractors of New England (IEC-NE) supports SB-849, which authorizes municipal building officials to enforce the state's occupational licensing laws.

IEC-NE strongly supports efforts to strengthen the enforcement of occupational licensing and apprenticeship registration requirements. Unfortunately, far too many contractors do not maintain the proper licenses, creating public safety concerns. In addition, individuals who have worked as apprentices but whose employers failed to properly register them, are unable to pursue licensing without repeating their apprenticeship hours. We continue to work with the state Department of Consumer Protection to enhance enforcement efforts and address these concerns. However, particularly in this economic climate, their resources are limited.

We believe that local building inspectors are well-positioned to assist the state in enforcing occupational licensing and apprenticeship registration requirements. Inasmuch as they are on-site on building projects reviewing code compliance issues, inspectors could also check for compliance with state licensing and registration laws. We therefore urge your support in clarifying that local building inspectors are authorized to check for such compliance and refer licensing and registration violations to the state Department of Consumer Protection for handling.

Authorizing local building officials to assist in licensing enforcement will help ensure that laws and regulations are consistently enforced and send a signal to contractors that violations will not be tolerated.

We urge your support for this bill.

The Independent Electrical Contractors of New England is the premier trade association representing Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island independent electrical contractors aggressively working with the industry to establish a free environment for merit shop -- a philosophy that promotes the concept of free enterprise, open competition and economic opportunity for all.