

# APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING FEBRUARY 24, 2011

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the committee my name is Cameron Champlin, I represent Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local Union 777 and have been a member for forty-five years. I am here to testify in opposition to HB-6380, which transfers the apprenticeship-training program from the Labor Department to the Department of Economic and Community Development.

I entered my apprenticeship in 1965 not realizing what a great opportunity and career was being offered to me. After serving my apprenticeship I attained my Plumbing and Heating & Cooling Licenses. Due to the training I received I was able to earn a very good living wage and receive a health plan and pension plan. This enabled me to become a productive member of our state. I bought a home raised a family and enjoyed a better than average life style and paid taxes to keep this great state moving forward.

The apprenticeship program has been successfully administered by the Labor Department since its inception. We believe it would be a serious mistake to change that pattern. This is one of the most successful programs that the state has to offer. A change to another Department would affect the program in a negative way. In the Labor Department it is one of their most important priorities in the DECD it would not be.

A few years ago when there was a possibility of understaffing this Department our industry, both Union and Non-Union put forth a bill to keep the program funded so that the quality would stay the same. We instituted a fee of Twenty-Five Dollars to be paid by each apprentice and a Thirty-Five Dollar Fee to be paid by an employer for each apprentice in his employ. This is how important the program is to us.

The new commissioner has been very involved in training in his last position and will certainly see that this program receives the attention it deserves.

For these reasons we feel it would be a grave injustice to move the program to DECD. Remember one of Connecticut's greatest assets is its well-trained and productive workforce.

If any of the committee would like to discuss this further I can be reached at [camc@att.net](mailto:camc@att.net) or cell (860) 287-0020.