Independent Electrical Contractors of New England, Inc.

Testimony
Lisa Hutner Stevens
Independent Electrical Contractors of New England
Before the
Education Committee
February 23, 2011

The Independent Electrical Contractors of New England (IEC-NE) *opposes* **HB-6385, An Act Implementing The Budget Recommendations of the Governor Concerning Education.**

IEC-NE is very supportive of the mission of the state's Technical High Schools, which provide students with the opportunity to obtain training and experience in the skilled trades. Many of our members serve on technical committees to provide input on training and curriculum to ensure that it remains relevant to the industry.

We are very concerned with the sections of this bill that transfer oversight of the state's Technical High Schools to the local and regional boards of education in the districts in which the school is located. This could undermine the role and integrity of technical training programs offered by the Technical High Schools and put the schools in direct competition for funding and support with other educational programs.

The Technical High Schools play a vital role in helping to ensure a steady supply of skilled tradespersons to meet the demand for workers in the construction trades. This benefits our overall economy.

The state has recently embarked on efforts to address concerns with the state's Technical High Schools to ensure that buildings are adequately maintained, equipment is available and academic and technical curriculum is rigorous. These efforts should be supported and continued to strengthen technical training opportunities for Connecticut's young people. Pushing these issues off to the local districts will undermine the progress that has been made in these areas.

1800 Silas Deane Highway, Rear Building, Rocky Hill, CT 06067
(860) 563-4953 Fax (860) 563-5453 Toll Free (866) GO IEC NE
email: lisa@iecne.org www.iecne.org