

**LABOR and PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING 3/3/11**

Senator Prague Representative Zalaski and members of the committee, my name is Cameron Champlin and I represent Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local Union 777. I am here to speak in favor of HB-6370.

I have been a member of the State of Connecticut Heating and Cooling Piping Board since 1988. That board and the other Occupational Licensing Boards have all been seeking to increase the number of inspectors since I have been there. There was always the argument that the cost for this was not in the budget of the Department of Consumer Protection. We all feel that additional inspectors would more than offset the initial cost through fines which should be imposed on violators of these statutes. I don't believe there has ever been a study to determine if this would be a viable solution.

Now that we have a new Governor, a new Department of Consumer Protection Commissioner and a new Department of Labor Commissioner perhaps there can be some dialogue between them to devise a plan that would combine the duties of inspectors to include inspections of related issues by one inspector. At the present time there are inspectors that visit jobsites and only look for violations for their specific department. For instance if inspectors could be used for enforcement of Apprenticeship, Wage and Hour, and License violations, which are very closely related, one inspector would now be doing in one visit what now takes three. This would result in a more efficient system to produce revenue for the state from fines levied on violators and at the same time help level the playing field for our good law abiding contractors who have to bid against these cheaters.

The system for citing violators should also be streamlined. Under the current system when a violation occurs it is incumbent on the inspector to write a comprehensive report on the reason for the citation. If the system would allow an inspector to issue a ticket, just like the State Police do for traffic violations, then it would be incumbent on the violator to either pay the appropriate fine or contest the citation. With this in place the inspector would only have to compile a lengthy report for anyone wishing to have a hearing on the matter. When this process is completed there shouldn't be any reduction in fines, it should be a mandatory fine for each specific violation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. If any of the committee wishes to discuss this further I can be reached at camc@att.net or cell (860) 287-0020.