

March 1, 2011, Testimony of:  
Robert Walsh, President of Network Installation Services, Inc. Wallingford, CT  
Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Re: SB-987

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Rob Walsh.

Resident of Cheshire. President of Network Installation Services in Wallingford.

My wife, Susan, and I started our business 15 years ago. We design and install communications cabling systems for Voice, Data, and Video applications and both hold Connecticut T-1 Telecommunications Contractor licenses. We are talking about copper and fiberoptic communications cabling, both inside buildings and between buildings on campuses. We do commercial cabling work throughout the State and specialize in campus environments, including higher education and private secondary schools.

Last month, we were fortunate enough to be approved by UCONN to provide telecommunications cabling under a "Contract For On-Call Trade Contractor Services". Approval to work under this contract makes us eligible to submit proposals on specific telecommunications projects as they come up, ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000, but it does not guarantee that we will be awarded any work, just that we have been pre-qualified to bid.

We are pleased to have passed this important hurdle at UCONN. There is plenty of competition and the qualification process is very rigorous. It touches on all aspects of our business:

Our prior project experience and higher education references.

Our technical training program and State apprenticeship experience.

Our Safety training and safety record

Our company insurance program, complete company financials, and bonding capacity.

All our manufacturer accreditations and our ability to offer extended manufacturer warranties.

It is hard to understand how the proposed "Community Workforce" legislation would be helpful to anyone. The UCONN management team has invested a lot of time and energy into doing the right thing by carefully qualifying trade contractors. The bidding process is still in place to ensure a fair price on the work to be performed. And prevailing wages are required to be paid to all workers on the projects. What is the benefit of narrowing the field of bidders under this proposed legislation?

I can tell you, as a lifelong resident and taxpayer in CT, representing a very skilled and experienced workforce, all of whom live and pay taxes in CT, we already consider ourselves to be members of the Community Workforce. Attempting to force business owners, like me, to either No Bid or to hire unknown and unproven workers outside their own company to get trade work done at UCONN is not realistic. It is simply a power play to eliminate fair competition and it steps on UCONN's ability to manage its own business.

I would urge you to reject the proposed ~~SB-987~~ legislation.

Thank you for allowing me the time to speak.