

Testimony of Frank J. DaCato  
In Opposition to  
House Bill #6384

Senator Lebeau, Representative Berger, members of the Commerce Committee, first I would like to thank you for taking the time to hear me today. My name is Frank DaCato and I am the training coordinator for Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 777. I am also a member of the State Plumbing Board and State Apprenticeship Council and chairperson of the Joint Apprentice Training Directors Committee of Connecticut. I was also at one time a registered apprentice. I am here today to speak in opposition to bill #6384, "An Act Transferring the Labor Departments Apprenticeship Program to the Department of Economic and Community Development".

There is an old axiom, "if it ain't broke don't fix it". Connecticut's apprentice system ain't broke. Federal regulation 29 CFR 29 regulates apprenticeships which fall under the jurisdiction of the federal DOL. Connecticut's apprenticeship programs fall under our state DOL. This makes for a seamless transfer of information when regulations change. We have people at the federal level and people at the state who speak the same language. 29 CFR 29 recently and currently is going over some major changes. Who in the Department of Economic and Community

Development can speak the language required to understand these changes? You may say that those currently in apprenticeship will be moving over to DECD and they understand the changes. Then my question to you would be why are we going through the cost, expense and trouble of moving this department? All that would be accomplished is the physical moving of people and nothing else.

Last year a proposal was made to put the apprenticeship program into the community colleges. This did not pass and I believe one of the reasons is our representatives realized that apprenticeship is not just about school, and it is also not just about work. It is a unique program that takes in both schooling and work experience. It requires an understanding of the melding of both these processes to make a journey person. It interacts with other departments within the DOL such as the wage and hour division and unemployment. This crucial interaction would be lost or at the very least be made almost impossible if this transfer to DECD were to happen.

Once again I thank you for your time and ask you to please vote against sending the apprenticeship program to DECD. I will be happy to try and answer any of your questions.