

**Associated Builders and Contractors of Connecticut (ABC)
Connecticut Association of Plumbing, Heating & Cooling Contractors (CT-PHCC)
Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association (CHCC)
Independent Electrical Contractors of New England (IEC-NE)
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
Mechanical Contractors Association of Connecticut
United Association Plumbers & Pipefitters, Local 777
Utility Contractors Association of Connecticut**

**General Law Committee
March 6, 2012**

**RE: SB-270 AN ACT CONCERNING CONSUMER PROTECTION.
HB-5327 AN ACT CONCERNING PROFESSIONAL LICENSES.**

The above-referenced union and non-union trade associations have a long history of working together to promote public policies to protect consumers and workers by strengthening enforcement of the state's occupational licensing laws. We have also supported efforts to encourage individuals to enter the skilled trades by promoting apprenticeship and vocational-technical training programs.

To ensure that individuals have the proper training, education and experience needed to obtain a license and strengthen enforcement of the state's occupational licensing laws, we have also worked to maintain the role of the licensing examining boards. The boards, which are comprised of union and non-union contractors and members of the public, play a vital role in protecting consumers and workers from unsafe and/or shoddy work by establishing and enforcing the training and educational requirements needed for licensure. Unfortunately, many contractors do not maintain the proper licenses or try to bypass training to perform work for which they are not qualified, creating public safety concerns. By ensuring that individuals performing occupational work are held to high standards, the occupational licensing boards help maintain the highest possible level of safety and training for Connecticut workers and consumers.

In order to more quickly review applications for licensure where the individual lacks the requisite training or educational hours, the licensing examining boards are now meeting on a monthly basis. These applications require careful consideration of an individual's relevant work experience to ensure that they meet the qualifications for licensure. We are certainly supportive of any additional efforts to expedite license processing but would want to ensure the continued role of the boards in processing these requests.

HB-5327 and SB-270 give the state Department of Consumer Protection broad authority to adopt regulations to expedite the processing of licenses and pursue unfair practices violations, respectively. Given the potential impact of such regulations on our trade, our workers and consumers, we respectfully request that committee members keep us fully apprised of any working drafts of the above-referenced bills and consider our position as the legislation moves forward.

Thank you.