

BRIEF STATEMENT OF JIM LOHR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CARPENTERS LABOR-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, IN FAVOR OF SB 70, AN ACT CONCERNING FAIRNESS IN CERTAIN COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

Members of the General Law Committee. My name is Jim Lohr, and I am the Deputy Director of the Carpenters Labor-Management Program, a coalition of approximately 2,000 union contractors and 20,000 union carpenters throughout New England. I would like to express my support for the intent of **S.B. 70, An Act Concerning Fairness in Certain Commercial Construction Contracts**.

I don't have to remind members of the committee just how difficult the last four years have been for those who earn a living in the construction industry. For the construction industry, this recession has been a depression. As a result, many longtime companies have shut their doors, and the unemployment rate in the trades is at least double the state's current unemployment rate.

This proposal should help alleviate problems of nonpayment or delayed payments which are not uncommon on some private jobsites--particularly during these harsh economic times. This issue is not only a problem for contractors but also for their workers. Many workers get their health coverage based on hours worked and employer contributions. If contractors aren't paid promptly, then workers and their families could be left temporarily without coverage because their contractor is waiting to be paid by a private owner or general contractor.

It is our understanding that this proposal is a compromise that has been worked out between general contractors and subcontractors who support this initiative. We think it's a good first step to try and address a very real problem in our industry that affects general contractors, subcontractors and--ultimately--workers.