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**GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY**

**Tuesday, February 21, 2012 – 12 noon LOB Room 2E**

**Re: H.B. 5057 – An Act Concerning Penalties for the Violation of Mechanical Contractor Registration Requirements.**

**Presented by: Joyce A. Wojtas, Lobbyist for the Mechanical Contractors Association of CT (MCAC)**

The MCAC, on behalf of its members, strongly supports HB 5057 that accomplishes the following:

- (1) It clarifies, under the definition of “Mechanical Contractor”, that the services they are offering to the public must be performed by employees who are licensed in accordance with C.G.S. Chapter 393, known as the “Occupational Licensing Laws” administered by the Department of Consumer Protection.
- (2) It establishes penalties for any mechanical contractor who does not register with the Department of Consumer Protection. Currently the law does not provide for any penalty for failure to register. The mechanical contractor, defined in Section 1 of the bill, is a contractor with more than ten employees who performs work on commercial, industrial, and/or educational facilities that involves many of the licensed trades (plumbing/piping, heating/piping, cooling, process piping) and requires employees with different licenses.

This bill does not have any impact on a small business owner (plumbing contractor, heating/air conditioning contractor, etc.) or any mechanical contractor that performs work exclusively on single family or multifamily private residences or dwelling consisting of not more than four units.

The penalties provided for in Sec. 2, subsection (e) (\$1,000 for the first offence and \$2,500 for any subsequent offense) may seem high for the violations, however, high penalties are the only way to stop a non-compliant contractor from violating this law and at the same time, the penalties may prevent an unsafe installation of a major facility’s heating system.

In 2011, this bill was reported favorably by the General Law, Judiciary, and Planning & Development Committees. It passed the Senate in the final days of the session and did not get called in the House.

MCAC respectfully requests your support for this bill and recommends the following amendment to the bill.

**Sec. 2. Section 20-341 of the general statutes is amended by adding subsection (e) as follows (Effective October 1, 2012):**

(NEW) (e) A mechanical contractor who does not obtain a certificate of registration as required by section 20-341t and who wilfully engages its employees in plumbing and piping work or in heating, piping and cooling work [or who wilfully supplies for employment an employee who does not hold a valid license to perform such work] shall be fined one thousand dollars for the first offense and two thousand five hundred dollars for each subsequent offense.

Reason for Admenment: Chapter 393 currently has penalties for contractors supplying unlicensed people on projects.

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