

Fisher and White Construction LLC

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To: Dear Chairman Doyle, Chairman Baram and members of the General Law Committee

RE: HB5149

It is my professional opinion that the residents of the State of Connecticut would greatly benefit from a "new" professional licensing and registration application process for those desiring to be Home Improvement Contractors. I believe the current process is allowing too many "hacks" to be working on our residential homes.

I attended a remodeling contractors meeting last month, where I met Representative Kim Rose and was highly energized with the fact, that there are many people willing to help professionalize HIC's. It is in our best interest to build a new application process that would require more education and testing and possibly bonding to increase the honest "carpenter". We need to have a planning committee that will listen to the voice of the many solid, current contractors and draw up ideas of building a better future for our state.

I also propose a simple points program, for current and new HIC's that would be available for the public to recognize who they are hiring to work in their homes. Points would be given and taken, just as ones credit score works. Those contractors that are not working professionally would have points deducted.

When I started my HIC business four years ago, I did not have many places to help me understand the ins and outs of contracting. I would have benefitted greatly from some local classes at the community college to answer my questions and show me some examples of how to conduct professional business. Recently I was taking a break and talking with one of my customers about business. I was looking for ideas on how to help a new customer with an estimate, yet not give too much of my time for a secondary estimate. We simply agreed that a small charge would be typical, just as he shared his experience through doing contracts at his work and charging the customer for it. There are day to day decisions that I would have done different with the guidance of a class at the local community college.

There are many tools that could help new and current contractors go about their business in a professional way. I believe that money talks, so the bottom line is there needs to be fees and fines. A fee could be a \$1,000.00 bond for a new applicant or a \$500.00 job done without a typed contract.

My few professional opinions have only lightly touched on these simple ideas. We can now gather this information from much experienced HIC's and use it to draw up some excellent laws that would help in all aspects of residential home remodeling in the State of Connecticut.

Connecticut needs professional people, doing a professional job, in a professional time frame! I greatly appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Edward J White