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Timothy G. Phelan
President

Sen. Doyle, Representative Braham, Sen. Witkos, Representative Carter and members of the General Law Committee,

My name is Tim Phelan and I am President of the Ct Retail Merchants Association. CRMA is a statewide trade association that represents some of the world's largest retailers as well as the state's main street merchants.

I am here tonight to testify in support of Raised Bill 6442, "An Act Exempting Certain Distribution Warehouse Employees from Professional Licensing Requirements"

This bill seeks to add to the list of exemptions currently allowed under CGS – 20 – 340. CRMA has asked the Committee to raise this bill and we appreciate very much your doing so and giving this bill a public hearing.

Our request from this bill stems from the growing number of retail companies that have chosen Ct as the location for important Distribution Centers. There are a number of national retailers that have opened distribution centers in the last 5/10 years. Ct is a desirable place for these retailers and this bill seeks only to have retail companies treated like the other 18 business that are exempted under this statute.

The purpose of our request is simple: the work performed in these facilities is consistent with the reasons cited for the exemptions already on the books. Primarily our facilities are located on our own premises, with work performed there for our own purposes. In addition, these facilities are NOT OPEN to the general public.

Also, we make this request so that member companies can more efficiently add jobs without going through the current request for waiver requirements that are in place with the Department of Consumer Protection. We think this request is consistent with current laws which sets forth of exempted employees, in particular that licensing requirements do not apply to: "employees of industrial firms whose main duties concern maintenance of ... elevator installation, repair, and maintenance work of such firm on ITS OWN premises or on premises leased for its own use.

We believe this language should be extended to the retail community. The actual work performed on premise at the number of DC's in Ct by retail companies show that it is clear that business conducted at the facilities should allow them to fall into the category of those who should be exempted from the requirements under Chapter 393 of the C.G.S.

I thank you for your time and would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.