



**Independent Electrical Contractors
of New England, Inc.**



**Testimony
Brian Bonner
Independent Electrical Contractors of New England
Before the
Public Safety Committee
March 18, 2013**

The Independent Electrical Contractors of New England (IEC-NE) opposes HB-6524 (Sections 1 & 2) as currently drafted. Unfortunately this bill as drafted seems to contemplate moving in the opposite direction from solving the problem of having building codes updated in a more frequent and timely manner by allowing for six year code adoption cycles rather than the current eighteen months. Failure of the State of Connecticut to adopt electrical code changes has become a perennial problem and puts our citizens at risk.

In our industry, the National Electric Code is the most authoritative and comprehensive document on electrical safety. The Code addresses safety issues ranging from fire to electrocution. It is adopted and created through a series of panel discussions across the country with the input of the people in the industry. It is revised every three years to reflect new technologies, improved installation and safety practices and critical safeguards for consumers and people that work in the industry. By failing to adopt the 2008 and 2011 updates to the National Electrical Code, Connecticut has neglected to incorporate many important safety provisions designed to reduce injuries and deaths resulting from electro shock. Failing to adopt the latest code also creates disconnects between the code that is used in the field for enforcement purposes and the code that is used to train apprentices and test electrical license applicants.

Representatives from IEC did have the opportunity recently to meet and discuss these issues with the proponents of this bill, other impacted stakeholders, and leadership of this Committee. We were pleased by the proponent's ask that the bill be tabled and their statement that they would not pursue this legislation. However, as explained at the meeting, our ongoing concerns remain, and we therefore would respectfully suggest that this bill be amended so that make-up of the full Codes & Standards Committee includes three additional representatives, one each from the electrical, plumbing, and HVAC industries. This modest change would provide the level of comfort needed by the impacted industries to ensure that they are truly part of the code review and adoption process. Furthermore, it would offer valuable industry expertise to the committee with regard to their other building code related matters and duties.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and our suggested amendment.