

Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association

2842 Main Street #259, Glastonbury, CT 06033 • Phone (860) 533-1163 • Fax (860) 533-1165

www.chcca.net

MEMBERS OF: CBIA – NFPA – ICC

Established 1972



TESTIMONY OF JENNIFER JENNINGS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEFORE THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MARCH 18, 2013

2013

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Eric D'Eramo
ENCON
1265 Woodend Road
Stratford, CT 06010
(203) 375-5228

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Tri City Heating & Cooling
362 New Haven Avenue
Milford, CT 06460
(203) 874-5228

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Custom Mechanical Services
92 Jeanette Street
Bristol, CT 06010
(860) 589-5471

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Edgerton, Inc.
(203) 268-6279

Jim Chard
F.J. Chard & Son
(860) 675-8076

Gary Corliss
Control Aire Supply
(800) 443-2473

Hank Cullinane
Clover Corp.
(860) 528-0081

Jeff Leone
Air Temp Mechanical
(860) 953-8888

Bryan Mackenzie
R & B Refrigeration
(203) 453-6831

Steve Szypulski
The Star Supply Co.
(203) 772-2240

The Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association (CHCC) submits the following comments *in opposition to* Sections 1 & 2 of HB-6524, An Act Concerning Building Code Adoption Cycles And Duties Of Building Officials:

Members of the heating and cooling industry have serious concerns with Sections 1 & 2 of this legislation as currently drafted, since it would allow for 6 year code adoption cycles at a minimum, rather than the existing statutory requirement of eighteen months.

Unfortunately, the State of Connecticut continually lags behind other states in adopting the most recent versions of the International Mechanical Code and the International Fuel Gas Code.

Technological changes and advancements in heating and cooling equipment and in installation requirements can create public safety concerns if such changes and advancements are not reflected in current code. Having the most recent versions of the codes adopted and enforced helps protect consumers and employees alike. In addition to failing to incorporate changes that are intended to update safety practices for workers and consumers, this creates a disconnect between the code that is used in the field for enforcement purposes and the code that is used to train apprentices and test HVAC license applicants. Ensuring that the performance of heating and cooling work is held to highest and most recent standards helps maintain the highest possible level of safety, training and professionalism for our industry, and for consumers.

CHCC thanks the leadership of the Public Safety Committee for your recent meeting with CHCC representatives and other impacted stakeholders to discuss these ongoing concerns. We sincerely appreciate that the proponents of the bill no longer wish to pursue this legislation. We do, however, have ongoing concerns regarding the lack of HVAC industry expertise on the current Codes & Standards Committee and as such, CHCC would like to suggest that this bill or other appropriate legislation before you be amended accordingly to incorporate a representative from the HVAC industry, along with our peers from the plumbing and electrical industries, on to the full Codes & Standards Committee. We feel that this valuable addition would allow for some much-needed industry expertise to the Committee and hopefully would continue to keep lines of communication open between those responsible for reviewing/adopting the codes, and those with the specific working knowledge required by the various codes, specifically those that impact the swiftly growing and changing HVAC industry.

CHCC thanks the members of the Public Safety Committee for your consideration of our comments and recommends amending the bill in accordance with our comments above.

CHCC is a trade association whose objectives are to strengthen and further trade relations, attract, educate and train necessary manpower, represent members at all levels of government and review and establish quality standards and procedures. The association represents over 125 Heating & Cooling Companies in Connecticut.