

# Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

Local Union



No. Forty

Hartford, New Haven, Middlesex, Tolland, Windham, New London Counties, State of Connecticut and Fisher's Island, State of N.Y.

100-A OLD FORGE ROAD • ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT 06067

Telephone: (860) 529-2616 • (CT Only) 1-800-201-5840 • FAX: (860) 529-3177

Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Jeremy Zeedyk; I am the organizer for the Sheet Metal Workers' Local Union 40 and I am writing in support of the proposed budget recommendation to add 6 additional Wage and Hour Investigators to the Department of Labor.

No matter what source or study you choose to believe regarding wage theft in Connecticut, it is apparent that there is a tremendous amount of money that is being lost; money that could build more projects, fund schools or close budget gaps.

As an organizer, I am tasked with representing the unorganized, or non-union, sheet metal workers throughout Connecticut. Workers all across the state who call, write or meet me on jobsites tell me time and again about how they are not receiving the proper wages and/or benefits from their employers. They know that they are being taken advantage of and are nearly helpless to stop the abuse. Sometimes they do not know who to turn to for help, but more often than not they are afraid to speak out for fear of reprisal. I and other organizers in Connecticut are able to help these workers shine some light on these violations by bringing the complaints anonymously to the Wage and Hour investigators.

Connecticut's Wage and Hour Division investigators have a remarkable track record of enforcement of violations through complaints, but they are buried with complaints and they need help. Nothing stops people from trusting you like inaction or the perception of inaction, and if complaints raised by workers go unsettled for months at a time, then workers lose faith and irresponsible contractors are emboldened to skirt the law. If allowed to go unchecked then violations will skyrocket and even more revenue and wages will be forever lost. Worse, if contractors from other states find it easier to cheat in Connecticut then they will flood our market with exploited workers causing massive layoffs and higher unemployment rates here.

The Sheet Metal Workers support adding additional Wage and Hour Investigators to the Department of Labor and will continue to work as a bridge to help all workers receive fair compensation for their labor.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Zeedyk".

Jeremy Zeedyk  
Organizer

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