



Executive Board

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Dominick Cieri
I.U.P.A.T. District Council 11

John Tarr
Sheet Metal Workers' #35

John Sweeney
Operative Plasterers/
Cement Masons #282

Mike Hassett
Roofers #9

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Elevator Constructors #91

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2/11/2014 Appropriations Committee

Senator Bye and Members of the Committee

My Name is Dave Roche, President of the Connecticut State Building Trades Council and Business Manager for the Sheet Metal Workers' Local #40. My organization represents thousands of construction workers and their families as well as hundreds of good Connecticut contractors that play by the rules for a fair and level playing field. Over my 35 years in the construction industry, I have been on numerous jobsites and have spoken to many workers.

Unfortunately, we have a lot of contractors that don't play by the rules and as good of a job as our Department of Labor's Wage and Workforce division does, they just don't have enough staff to catch all these cheaters.

I have taken part over the last year in a group put together by Labor Commissioner Sharon Palmer called Chasing Cheaters. This is a coalition of labor and management to explore how we can put an end to unscrupulous contractors that cheat the state of Connecticut out of taxes and workers out of wages.

The State of Connecticut has prevailing wage laws that require a contractor that works on a state project to pay a determined wage for that certain classification of work. It is determined by craft and wages paid to workers union and non-union. There is a reporting form that must be submitted to the state by the contractor for all employees who worked on the job and what was paid by each work classification. For example: if a contractor employs two crafts, in this case I will use the Roofers and Sheet Metal Workers, and the Sheet Metal Worker prevailing wage determination is \$50.00 per hour and the Roofers prevailing wage determination is \$40.00 per hour a contractor must fill the certified payroll accordingly. What we have seen numerous times in the past is that the Contractor will classify all workers as Roofers and pay them as such cheating the worker out of wages and or benefits and the State out of payroll taxes.

This is just one of many ways contractors find to cheat the system, and the only safeguard is that we file a complaint with the Department of Labor Wages and Workplace department and they try and get an investigator out to the project. Unfortunately, over the years this has grown to where the department of labor cannot keep up with the complaints that are filed.

If the department of labor was able to get 6 new investigators, it could start to level the playing field for the Connecticut contractors that play by the rules day in and day out. I am confident that the fines received from these cheaters will be much greater than the cost of 6 new investigators. This is a problem that has become way too big for the current staff of the department of labor to handle as they are. In talking to the Wage and Workplace state employees, I have seen their frustration from knowing there is so many cheating contractors getting away with cheating our system. I hope that this can become a reality and the contractors and their employees that play by the rules can bid and supply workers to Connecticut jobsites knowing that our state is watching and protecting them,

Thank You,

David A. Roche

President Connecticut State Building and Construction Trades Council