



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – February 28, 2014
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Interim Commissioner Robert J. Klee
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Macky McCleary

Senate Bill No. 238 (Raised) – AAC ESTABLISHING A LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR LICENSE

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Senate Bill No. 238 – AAC Establishing a Landscape Contractor License. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

DEEP has serious concerns about the proposal and welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

The proposed bill would establish new regulatory authority over landscape contractors, which would include a licensing board, examinations, continuing education and recordkeeping requirements. These activities are well outside the scope of DEEP, in that there are no environmental or human health issues involved. The proposed bill would require a significant allocation of resources to develop and maintain these licensing activities without any concomitant funding. This bill would regulate even part-time lawn mowing operations that exceed the relatively low threshold of \$5000 per year.

Additionally, in lines 44 through 46 the bill exempts landscape contractors from obtaining Home Improvement Contractor registrations issued by the Department of Consumer Protection. Removing these businesses from the current requirement of holding this registration will have a dramatic, negative impact on consumers by removing important protections that homeowners now enjoy. Specifically, home improvement contractors by law must provide written contracts to consumers that other trades do not have to provide; and such written contracts must include a start date, completion date, and give homeowners a three-day right to cancel the contract. Consumers would also lose the right to access the Home Improvement Guaranty Fund for restitution for loss of funds caused by shoddy workmanship or fraud by home improvement contractors.

In summary, DEEP does not support Raised Senate Bill No. 238 – AAC Establishing a Landscape Contractor License.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP's Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov (or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov).