



**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS**

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## **The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers**

### **Testimony to the General Law Committee**

#### **In Support of SB 412 AAC the Enforcement of Certain Occupational Licensing Statutes**

**March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

To Senator Doyle, Representative Baram, and members of the General Law committee, I am writing on behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in support of SB 412, An Act Concerning the Enforcement of Certain Occupational Licensing Statutes.

The IBEW represents nearly 6,000 licensed electrical journeymen and apprentices in the State of Connecticut. We take pride in our training and apprenticeship programs, and our top priorities are safety and integrity of our workforce. The IBEW has three representatives on the Electrical Work Examining Board within the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP), and therefore we are an active participant in the efforts of the board and the DCP to enforce our occupational licensing laws and regulations.

As some of you may know, there was legislation enacted in 2007, Public Act 07-188, which made a variety of changes to the occupational licensing and certification laws within the DCP statutes. The IBEW worked with the DCP on some aspects of that bill, as there were some provisions within the legislation that the IBEW could support. Having said that, a portion of the 2007 act granted authority to the Commissioner of DCP that was previously held by the occupational licensing boards. The IBEW, and other members of the various licensing boards, feel an unintended consequence of this provision has been a decrease in enforcement activity. There has been concern over the years that such diminished enforcement is a result of lesser involvement by the licensing boards after the passage of 07-188. In fact, there is evidence that fines collected for violations under the licensing statutes have reduced significantly.

As a result of these concerns, members representing the various licensing boards got together to discuss possible remedies. This group was comprised of individuals from the construction trades, both union and non-union, as well as business owners. There was consensus amongst the participants that the licensing boards were not nearly as involved with enforcement as they had been prior to the passage of 07-188, and there are signs licensing violations are on the uptick, but penalties are not. This legislation attempts to remedy this by awarding some previously held authority back to the boards, while keeping the Commissioner's current authority in-tact.

**IBEW**

We understand the DCP is in the process of hiring more inspectors, which is a welcome development and will help bolster enforcement. However, without this legislation the boards would continue to be largely left in the dark when it comes to the number of complaints and violations which come through the Department. We feel that if the Examining Boards are included in the disciplinary process, we can feel confident offenders will receive suitable penalties, and the integrity and safety of the construction industry will be maintained. We would like to thank the committee for raising this bill, as well as the House Majority Leader, Rep. Aresimowicz, for his support of this issue. We are happy to participate in any ongoing discussions regarding the legislation. Thank you.

Sean Daly  
President  
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