

FOUNDATION FOR FAIR CONTRACTING OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

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Labor and Public Employees Committee
Public Hearing

March 11, 2014

Re: HB 5454 - *An Act Concerning Apprenticeship Ratios*

Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, Senator Markley, Representative Smith and members of the Labor Committee,

The Foundation for Fair Contracting of Connecticut (FFC) is a non-profit organization created by labor and management in order to monitor all public works construction projects covered under the Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-53 and the Davis-Bacon Act. We accomplish this by reviewing public documents prepared and/or submitted by the owner and contractor(s). We focus on licensing, proper payment of prevailing wage rates, proper classification of workers and properly administered state apprenticeship standards.

The FFC represents a number of licensable trades and their contractor associations, including the International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 91, the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 11, and the Sheet Metal Workers International Association Local Union 38 and Local Union 40.

The FFC opposes HB 5454 "*An Act Concerning Apprenticeship Ratios*".

We have concerns with amending the existing regulations pursuant to section 20-332 to specify hiring ratios regarding apprentices, journeymen and contractors.

Before delving into the reasons why changing our apprenticeship ratios is both dangerous and just another ploy to hire cheap labor, it's important to note that we just had this debate, and came to a unanimous resolution.

In 2010, Public Act No. 10-27 (aka SB 133) was written into law. That act is attached hereto for your reference. The public hearing on SB 133 was heard before the General Law Committee on February 16, 2010. Jenn Jennings submitted testimony on behalf of the CT Plumbing, Heating & Cooling Contractors Association indicating that, "This minor change in the law will give plumbing, heating and cooling contractors the ability to expand their businesses and provide more apprenticeship training opportunities for Connecticut's young people. **Clearly this is a win-win** [emphasis added], particularly during these challenging economic times." A copy of Ms. Jennings' testimony is also attached hereto.

What all parties -- that is labor and management, union and non-union -- agreed to in 2010 is that for the first journeyman there shall be one apprentice, for the second journeyman there shall be a second apprentice and for every three journeymen thereafter there shall be one more apprentice. Right now, for a large crew of seven, we would have five journeymen to three apprentices.

It would be incredibly irresponsible to have a one to one ratio for more than two journeymen. The licensed construction trades can be very dangerous. They install pipes, HVAC, flat glass, elevators and escalators, fire protection, toxic paint materials and electrical wiring. We cannot support proposed legislation that would impede upon a journeymen's ability to properly train an apprentice in a licensed craft. It is crucial that we keep both our apprentices and journeymen safe when working on construction projects.

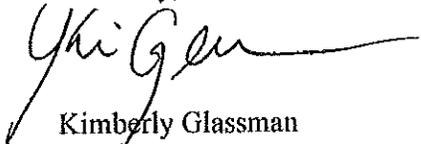
Our licensed journeymen have been through 4-5 year long apprenticeship programs. They are trained in their scope of work. And we depend on them to effectively and thoroughly train the next generation. Many of our journeymen are sitting on the bench themselves, waiting to go back to work to pay their mortgages, support their families, make sure that they and their children maintain their health insurance, and work until they can retire with dignity. We owe these men and women, who went into the construction industry to build a solid career, the opportunity to be a part of and strengthen our middle class.

Apprentices are paid less than journeymen.

Make no mistake about it -- the proponents of this bill do not want to increase apprenticeship opportunities. They want to hire cheap labor and keep our journeymen on the bench. They want to underbid our public projects at the expense of people's safety. Connecticut is not suffering from a shortage of skilled workers. We have thousands of journeymen who are capable of training the hundreds upon hundreds of apprentices in our state. And we owe it to our apprentices to make sure that they have the opportunity to be trained enough to become journeymen themselves.

If this proposed legislation were to pass into law, our construction industry would plummet. I strongly urge this committee to vote no on this bill. We need to send a message that we support our journeymen, we support our apprentices, and we believe in safe workplaces for all.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Glassman
Director



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Substitute for Raised S.B. No. 133
Session Year 2010

Printer-Friendly

AN ACT CONCERNING APPRENTICE TO JOURNEYMEN AND CONTRACTOR RATIOS.

To change existing apprentice to journeymen and contractor hiring ratios for certain tradespersons.

Introduced by: General Law Committee

New today	2-4 days old	5 days & older
Text of Bill Public Act No. 10-27 [pdf] File No. 83 [pdf] LAB Joint Favorable [pdf] GL Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference [pdf] Raised Bill [pdf]		Committee Actions LAB Joint Fav. Rpt LAB Vote Tally Sheet [pdf] GL Joint Fav. Rpt GL Vote Tally Sheet [pdf] Votes Senate Roll Call Vote 120 Fiscal Notes Fiscal Note for File Copy 83 Bill Analyses Bill Analysis for File Copy 83 Summary for Public Act No. 10-27

Bill History (In reverse chronological order)

Date	Action Taken
5/11/2010	Signed by the Governor
5/5/2010	Transmitted to the Secretary of State
5/4/2010 (LCO)	Public Act 10-27
4/27/2010	In Concurrence
4/27/2010	On Consent Calendar
4/27/2010	House Passed
4/22/2010	House Calendar Number 388
4/22/2010	Favorable Report, Tabled for the Calendar, House
4/21/2010	On Consent Calendar
4/21/2010	Senate Passed
3/23/2010 (LCO)	File Number 83
3/23/2010	Senate Calendar Number 94
3/23/2010	Favorable Report, Tabled for the Calendar, Senate
3/23/2010 (LCO)	Reported Out of Legislative Commissioners' Office
3/16/2010 (LCO)	Referred to Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis 03/22/10 5:00 PM
3/9/2010 (LCO)	Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office
3/9/2010 (LAB)	Joint Favorable
3/5/2010	Favorable Change of Reference, House to Committee on Labor and Public Employees
3/5/2010	Favorable Change of Reference, Senate to Committee on Labor and Public Employees
3/4/2010 (LCO)	Reported Out of Legislative Commissioners' Office
3/3/2010 (LCO)	Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office
3/2/2010 (GL)	Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference Labor and Public Employees
2/11/2010	Public Hearing 02/16
2/10/2010	Referred to Joint Committee on General Law

Co-sponsors of SB-133
Rep. William Aman, 14th Dist.
Rep. John Mazurek, 80th Dist.

Click for Public Hearing Testimony

Please direct all inquiries regarding the status of bills to the House and Senate Clerks' Offices.



Substitute Senate Bill No. 133

Public Act No. 10-27

AN ACT CONCERNING APPRENTICE TO JOURNEYMEN AND CONTRACTOR RATIOS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection shall amend existing Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies adopted pursuant to section 20-332 of the general statutes to specify the following allowable hiring ratios regarding apprentices, journeymen and contractors for the following trades:

TRADE

Electrical, Plumbing, Heating, Piping and Cooling,
Sprinkler Fitter and Sheet Metal Work

Apprentices	Licensees (Journeymen or Contractors)
1	1
2	2
3	5
4	8
5	11
6	14
7	17
8	20
9	23

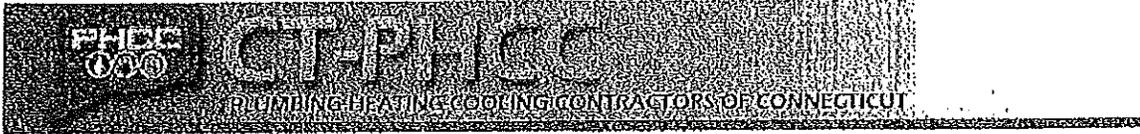
Substitute Senate Bill No. 133

10

26

Ratio continues at 3 Journeypersons
To 1 Apprentice

Approved May 10, 2010



**TESTIMONY
JENN JENNINGS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CT PLUMBING, HEATING & COOLING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 16, 2010**

The Connecticut Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors Association (CT-PHCC) supports the intent of SB-133, An Act Concerning the Apprenticeship to Journeymen Contractor Hiring Ratios.

We would like to thank Sen. Tom Colapietro for reaching out to union and non-union trade groups to develop a fair proposal that addresses inequities in the apprenticeship ratio for the plumbing, heating and cooling trades. We would also like to thank Rep. Jim Shapiro and the members of the committee for their support of this initiative.

It is our understanding that there is an agreement to make the numeric hiring ratio of apprentices to journeymen for plumbing, heating and cooling contractors consistent with the hiring ratio for the electrical and other trades and that the bill will be redrafted accordingly. Based on a review of factors such as the specific trade requirements and availability of skilled personnel, there is certainly no justification for having a different apprentice hiring ratio for plumbing, heating and cooling contractors and other trades.

This minor change in the law will give plumbing, heating and cooling contractors the ability to expand their businesses and provide more apprenticeship training opportunities for Connecticut's young people. Clearly this is a win-win, particularly during these challenging economic times.

CT-PHCC is a not-for-profit trade association that represents the professional plumbing, heating and cooling contractors in the state of Connecticut. CT-PHCC and its members are committed to protecting the health and safety of the public. Contractors who belong to the association have demonstrated reliability and trustworthiness and are licensed by the state of Connecticut.