



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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**TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014**

Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Public Hearing Testimony

H.B. No. 5454 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING APPRENTICESHIP RATIOS.

Good afternoon Chairs Holder-Winfield and Tercyak, Ranking Members Markley and Smith, and Labor and Public Employees Committee Membership,

I am Representative Tim Ackert serving the 8<sup>th</sup> district. I am here to speak in favor of HB 5454, AAC Apprenticeship Ratios.

I would like to first thank you for raising this important legislation. We as legislators have and continue to be concerned with quality jobs in Connecticut. We have enacted many pieces of legislation to address supporting those looking for ways to get training, and support those companies that help in this laudable effort. HB 5454 does just that by helping those looking to go in to the trades and get training, while making a good wage.

I have witnessed first-hand, both as a legislator and as a professional electrical contractor, that these apprenticeship programs when completed lead to high quality jobs with very good wages. All companies that have apprenticeship programs must be approved by the state as a sponsor and these sponsors have obligations to provide a level of training to get the apprentice from learner to licensed technician.

We are an aging workforce in the trades. In fact, I just taught a class of electricians last night and more than half the class was older than myself. In a sad way we have been lucky to be in a down economy, but as we come out of this recession the workforce will need to meet the job needs for these fields. Further, we have many veterans returning and struggling to find good jobs. These additional apprenticeship positions will help these good men and women.

I encourage you to contact our state technical schools, and private providers like Lincoln Tech and Porter and Chester, to find out how many apprentices are ready to go to work in these fields and to hear the struggles they face with placing their graduates. I have and in that light I strongly believe this to be a good workforce development and small business bill, and I encourage your support.