

Senator Doyle, Representative Baram and Members of the General Law Committee:

My name is Matthew DiCenso, I live with my parents in Derby, Ct. I am a full time Platt Regional Vocational Technical High School in Milford Connecticut. I am a senior in the HVAC Department. By going to the trade school it gives me 1500hrs towards my 8000 apprenticeship hours. After the 8000 hours are over I can take the test to get my S-2 license.

The heating and air conditioning trade is a combination of multiple trades, and thrives on thousands of hours in the field to become proficient enough for employment after graduation. The Work Based Learning Program is a vital program to help students gain experience with a trade-related company before graduation. Two days a week with juniors, and three days a week with seniors you're able to go out on a shop day, be excused from school, and gain experience out in the field with a licensed technician as your mentor.

In September I applied for apprenticeship at a local company but with lack of technicians they needed to get ratio relief. So they sent in the forms and 3 months went by without a word. The ratio relief was finally accepted and I sent in my WBL form. But in order to work I had to wait to get my pre-apprentice card. So about 5 total months went by until I got my apprentice card in. At the end of February I finally received my Apprentice card. With only 3 months left in school and a few weeks of shop left it's a disappointment.

In the end it took about 6 months in order for me to work on WBL and with only a handful of weeks left in shop it makes little sense to start now. I feel like trade companies won't bother hiring High School apprentices due to the amount of paper work and time it takes to be approved. These contractors stick their neck out for students who want to work and get shafted from the State of CT.

Sincerely,

Matthew DiCenso



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