

Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

Local Union



No. Forty

Hartford, New Haven, Middlesex, Tolland, Windham, New London Counties, State of Connecticut and Fisher's Island, State of N.Y.

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TESTIMONY of
Jeremy Zeedyk
Business Representative
SMART Local Union 40

Raised Bill No. 6808 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING STATUTES

February 24, 2015

Senator Leone, Representative Baram and esteemed members of the General Law Committee:

The Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation (SMART) International Union Local 40 submits this testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 6808 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING STATUTES.

SMART Local 40 is a building and construction trades and production union which represents over 1000 working families who are employed by approximately 50 signatory construction contractors constructing, renovating and testing buildings throughout Connecticut and the region, many of which are State of Connecticut projects. We are one of the 14 unions commonly referred to as the "Building Trades".

As a public safety matter, most aspects of sheet metal work are licensable. Sheet metal workers; install air handling units on roofs and in buildings; design, manufacture and install ductwork systems throughout buildings; install, inspect and maintain life safety systems such as fire and smoke dampers; and test, adjust and balance HVAC systems. This work is technical in nature and the specifications and requirements are extremely demanding. To become proficient in the production and installation of these systems involves a registered apprenticeship as well as thousands of hours of on the job training.

Even with the required licensing of this work, we often find workers not being licensed or registered as apprentices and contractors performing work that they are not licensed to perform. Sometimes it is found when it is too late and the work is done and it is not up to code or has had a noticeable failure of performance. Hopefully we do not have to find out when a catastrophe occurs and life safety systems were not installed properly and lives are lost.

Local 40 supports the efforts of this bill to promote greater enforcement of the licensing laws to create an environment in this state where licensed work is only being done by those professionals who have been properly trained and have the necessary experience to perform such work. This will lead to better results in construction, less re-work of failed improperly operating systems, and less public safety concerns in the future. It will also encourage contractors to properly register their apprentice workers, allowing them an opportunity to gain a license and maintain employment in the future.

SMART Local 40 looks forward to continuing this discussion with the committee and offering input and solutions to this and other issues concerning the construction industry

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Zeedyk".

Jeremy Zeedyk
Business Representative
SMART Union Local 40