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Testimony by **Ronald Penton**, Senior Project Manager, LaRosa Building Group LLC  
Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee on February 24, 2015  
**HB 6246** an act Concerning Labor Agreements and the Governing Bodies of Municipalities.

Good Evening, my name is Ron Penton, and I'm a Senior Project Manager with LaRosa Building Group of Meriden. LaRosa is a General Contractor / Construction Management firm in business since 1987. We employ approximately 35 people, and perform \$30 - \$40 million dollars in construction projects annually for the State of Connecticut, local municipalities, and the Federal government.

Unlike many people testifying before you on this subject, I am not a business owner, or a representative of a trade organization. I am just an employee, as is my son. We are also both taxpayers. We simply want the right to work on projects funded by our tax dollars, and we want the decisions on who works on tax-funded projects to be decided in an open hearing. As an elected member of the Planning and Zoning Commission in my town, I deal with open public hearings every month. They may be messy, but open and fair democracy has always been messy.

You have and will be told that Project Labor Agreements (PLA), Community Workforce Agreements (CWA) and similar agreements do not prohibit non-union firms from bidding, and technically that is correct. But they do burden open shop firms with a number of restrictions, including not being able to employ all of their own employees. The result is that open shop firms almost never submit bids on these labor agreement projects. This greatly reduces the number of qualified bidders who would typically submit bids on these projects. If anyone on this committee believes that reducing the number of qualified bidders will not result in higher prices, then this testimony is a waste of time.

On larger projects, the potential cost savings on projects can be measured in the millions of dollars. Taxpayers in cities and towns have the right to be informed and aware of decisions being made, and how their tax dollars are being spent. Most taxpayers assume all bids are fair, and open to all qualified bidders.

If PLA's and CWA's are as fair and beneficial as presented by the unions, why should anyone be afraid of a public hearing?

I support, and urge the committee to support HB 6246.

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