

Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee February 24, 2015

HB 6246 an Act Concerning Labor Agreements and the Governing Bodies of Municipalities

My name is Carl Emery and I am Field Superintendent for Sarazin General Contractors, Inc. I have the pleasure of working for Sarazin for the last 11 years but they have been in business since 1991 as a mid-size general contractor working in a varying range of projects including hospitals, schools, libraries, office buildings and historic structures.

I am here to support the HB 6246, An Act Concerning Labor Agreements and the Governing Bodies of Municipalities. I am not sure how Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) are decided but I believe input from the taxpaying public is absolutely necessary. These are expensive projects that Connecticut taxpayers are paying for yet, I have been on jobsites that have also had PLAs on the same site and I see a large percentage of out of state construction workers and construction companies on these jobs when the fact is that there are a lot of CT construction workers still out of work. How does this benefit our state? What returns do I get for my tax dollars? What returns do my out of work construction buddies get for their tax dollars?

It seems to me that while PLAs are harmful to non-union contractors and their employees, they also have a negative impact on the cost of construction. I have read a few studies that show that a PLA can increase the cost of construction. I can only assume that the taxpayers would want to have the opportunity to discuss that situation in a public setting with their elected officials.

Construction plays a large part in our state's economic recovery. While our economy is slowly recovering, construction has not caught up to many other sectors of the economy. It is important that the many skilled tradesman of our state have every opportunity to get back to work and provide for their families, keep the families in their homes, and be able to educate their children. It is also important that *every worker has the ability to share in that recovery*, not just a select few. In an economy so desperate for jobs, it is simply not fair that a contractor not have the opportunity to work in the state they live in and support through their tax dollars.

I support HB 6246, and urge the members of the committee to support it as well. A decision as significant as a PLA deserves a public hearing and all voices is heard.

Thank you

Carl Emery
Sarazin GC Inc.