

Commerce Committee Public Hearing

March 10, 2016

Testimony of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers regarding

SB 396 An Act Concerning A Fast Track for Apprenticeship

Senator Hartley, Representative Perone, Senator Crisco, Representative Vargas, and members of the Commerce Committee, my name is Paul Costello and I am here today to speak on behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in opposition of Raised Bill 396, An Act Concerning a Fast Track for Apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship is a time proven system of training a generation of highly skilled trade and professional workers through on-the-job training along with related instructions. On-the-job training varies from 2,000 to 8,000 hours for each occupation. There is a detailed work schedule that outlines the required work experience the apprentice needs to achieve to be proficient in their craft. Many of these occupations also require them to obtain a license upon completion of their apprenticeship. The apprentice is required to work under direct supervision of a journey person in order to gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to work in a safe environment. The apprentice is required to complete a log book and have it signed by a supervisor to verify they received the training.

Apprenticeable trades range from automotive, to culinary, machine tool, service industry, and building and construction trades to name a few. Allowing an apprentice to fast track their required training would create inconsistencies with the required work schedule. Not following the work schedule and allowing credit for prior work experience offers no guarantee that the apprentice learned all of the skills of their trade. In the case of an apprentice electrician they are required to work a minimum of 8,000 hours before they complete their apprenticeship. They must receive on-the-job training with safety, proper use of tools and equipment, installation, maintenance, and repair in residential, commercial, and industrial establishments. These installations must be completed per code in order to protect person and property.

One would not want a doctor that fast tracked to become a surgeon to operate on them without the required time, proper training, and experience in their field. Apprentices learn their craft the same way and go on to licensure to build and maintain homes, offices, schools, hospitals each include life safety systems. Apprenticeship is known as "The Other Four Year Degree". Allowing an apprentice to fast track will lower the level of professionalism in their craft and could jeopardize their safety and the safety of others.

I urge you to oppose Raised Bill 396.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Paul Costello
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