

TESTIMONY – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2016 GAE COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY: Joyce A. Wojtas, Lobbyist-Mechanical Contractors Association of CT

Subject: Governors Bill No. 15 – An Act Adopting the Requirements of North Caroline State Board of Dental Examiners v. Federal Trade Commission and Making Minor Revisions to Boards and Commissions Statutes.

The Mechanical Contractors Association of CT was made aware of the decision in the above referenced court case last year and understands the need for the statutory changes in GB 15.

We believe the changes are consistent with the Guidelines issued by the Federal Trade Commission to eliminate potential problems for the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) and/or the various boards and commissions within their jurisdiction.

Although I am not, nor have I ever been, a member of any board of commission covered in this bill, I would like to say a few words on behalf of the “occupational licensing boards” established under C.G.S. Chapter 393, which I personally have worked closely with over the years. All licensed members of these boards are experts in their trades. They spent many years in training, working in their trades, and participating in continuing education programs. These unpaid volunteers, with their expertise and general knowledge of their licensed trades are invaluable to the State. I would like to acknowledge the public members of the boards, many experienced business people, who also volunteer. Many volunteers never claim the mileage reimbursement that is allowed by law for their service.

I trust that the members of the GAE Committee, as well as other committees understand the significant role the boards play providing advice and assisting in administration of the licensing laws. These laws were established in the interest of protecting public safety and enforcement of the occupational licensing laws is a key part of safe installations of electrical, plumbing, piping, heating, HVAC, sheet metal and elevator work. Adequate enforcement of these laws is necessary. Without appropriate enforcement, this law just becomes a joke, or as some put it, “a cash cow” for the State.

I appreciate your consideration of the following amendments to the bill, which will help somewhat to improve enforcement :

1)Amendment to: Sec. 2. Section 21a-7, Subsection (a) (4)

In line 75, after the words “board or commission.” insert the following “Advanced notice to the affected party of any pending investigation, complaint, or inspection shall be strictly prohibited.”

2)Amendment to: Sec. 3. Section 21a-8, Subsection (a) (8)

In line 160, after the word “investigation.” Insert the follow “Advanced notice to the affected party of any pending investigation, complaint, or inspection shall be strictly prohibited.”

Note: This proposed amendment is mirrored after C.G.S. Sec. 19a-531 (Rev. P.A. 15-242) Re: Public Health and Well Being. It does not include the Class B Misdemeanor penalty that is in Sec. 19a-51.

It is believed that the statutory inclusion of a prohibition against advanced notice of these actions will suffice as a deterrent.

Thank you for your consideration of this amendment.

