

Testimony in Support of SB837 – An Act Concerning Apprenticeship Opportunities for High Growth, High Demand Jobs

by Jack Traver Jr.
President
Traver IDC
3/9/17

Dear members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Jack Traver and I am President of Traver IDC, a 78 year old CT electric company based in Waterbury.

I am an active member of Connecticut Association of Smaller Manufacturers (CASM). CASM is comprised of the Smaller Manufacturers Association (SMA), the New Haven Manufacturers Association (NHMA), Manufacturers Education and Training Alliance (METAL) and the New England Spring & Metal Stamping Association (NESMA) and collectively represents over 400 companies with more than ten percent of the employees in the state's manufacturing sector.

I also sit on the board of directors of the Waterbury Chamber of Commerce and am an active member of their Public Policy Committee.

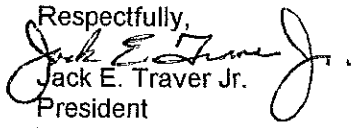
I'd like to speak to 2 separate issues in support of this bill.

The 1st issue is that I believe there is a strong need for this task force to investigate the apprentice to journeyman ratios that exist for 3 separate high growth, high demand jobs. These ratios are outdated and serve to squelch job growth. The ratios that exist for electricians, plumbers, and heating and cooling workers all have components that include 3:1 ratios. Please refer to the attached (outdated) OLR report for further details. Several neighboring states have more business friendly ratios. In my opinion, 2:1 ratios make much more sense. At Traver IDC, we have 14 journeymen which only allows us to hire 6 apprentices. We applied to the state requesting ratio relief to hire 10 apprentices and were only granted partial ratio relief to hire 7. See attached letter from the Commissioner of the Dept of Labor. Thus, we were forced to NOT give 3 young men or women the opportunity at an outstanding high paying career.

The 2nd issue that I believe should be investigated is an apprenticeship program for the growing field of "Mechatronics" - the marriage of the mechanical and the electronic worlds. Presently, 2 or 3 of the state vo-tech high schools offer the Mechatronics curriculum but I strongly believe that this needs to be expanded to more vo-tech high schools and somehow integrated into the Community Colleges. Virtually, every one of the 5000 manufacturing firms in CT and many service organizations could definitely hire "Mechatronics" technicians. Of course, the whole licensing and apprenticeship concept would need to be roled out in order to truly add credibility to this badly needed profession.

Thank you for your time and commitment to serving on this extremely important committee that is so vital to the State's future.

Respectfully,


Jack E. Traver Jr.
President
Traver IDC
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Topic:
APPRENTICESHIP;
Location:
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS;
Scope:
Federal laws/regulations; Connecticut laws/regulations;



January 8, 2001

2001-R-0064

APPRENTICESHIP RATIOS FOR ELECTRICIANS, PLUMBERS AND HEATING AND COOLING WORKERS IN CONNECTICUT'S NEIGHBORING STATES

By: Paul Frisman, Research Analyst

You asked what the apprentice to journeyman ratio is for electrical workers, plumbers, and heating and cooling workers in Connecticut's neighboring states, and whether any of these states have more "liberal" ratio rules, that is, require fewer journeymen per apprentice than does Connecticut

SUMMARY

We surveyed the states of New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine and Vermont. For the most part, Vermont and Rhode Island have a more liberal policy than Connecticut for electrical workers. Maine, Massachusetts and New York have stricter policies.

Vermont and Rhode Island also have a more liberal policy than Connecticut for plumbing contractors in most cases. New York, Maine and Massachusetts generally have the same ratio as Connecticut, although Massachusetts' ratio varies by region.

The ratios for heating and cooling workers are the same for all states.

APPRENTICESHIP RATIOS

Apprenticeship ratios refer to the number of journeymen who must be employed for each apprentice hired. Ratios are set to assure proper supervision and training. In some cases, there is one ratio for the first apprentice and a different ratio for additional apprentices. The first number in a ratio refers to the number of apprentices and the second the number of journeymen. A ratio of "1:1, then 1:3," means that one journeyman must be on hand for the first apprentice in a program and three more journeymen must be employed for each additional apprentice. Programs in states with a 1:1, 1:3 ratio, therefore, may have one apprentice and one journeyman; two apprentices and four journeymen; three apprentices and seven journeymen, and so on.

Several factors may alter those numbers in particular situations. For example, many states have a job site ratio of 1:1. This means there must be one journeyman for each apprentice on a job site.

The ratios employed by non-union contractors in a particular state also may differ from those that operate according to union contracts, or on public works projects that fall under the Davis-Bacon (prevailing wage) Act. States also may grant waivers to program sponsors if a sponsor only has a single journeyman or licensee, or because of a shortage of skilled workers. In some states, ratios vary by region or city.

RATIOS OF CONNECTICUT AND NEIGHBORING STATES

Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection regulations set the apprenticeship ratios for electrical workers, plumbers, and heating and cooling workers in Connecticut (Conn. Agencies Reg. § 20-332-15a(e)(1), (2) and (3)).

Electrical Workers

A licensed electrical contractor in Connecticut may hire one apprentice, and may hire a second apprentice for the first licensed electrical journeyman he employs. An electrical contractor employing more than one journeyman may hire an additional apprentice for each additional three journeymen employed. Connecticut's apprenticeship ratio for electrical workers, therefore, is 1:1 for the first two apprentices, then 1:3.

Maine and New York have a stricter ratio than Connecticut, requiring one journeyman for the first apprentice and three journeymen for each additional apprentice (1:1, then 1:3). Massachusetts also is more strict, requiring three journeymen for each apprentice hired (1:3).

Rhode Island is more liberal with regard to private sector work, requiring one journeyman for each apprentice (1:1). But Rhode Island is stricter on contracts involving state and federal work, requiring five journeymen for each apprentice. Vermont also is more liberal, requiring one journeyman for each of the first four apprentices, then three journeymen for each additional apprentice (1:1 for the first four apprentices, then 1:3).

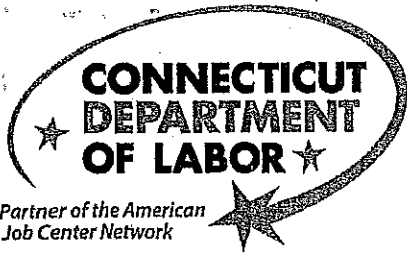
Plumbers

In Connecticut a licensed plumber may hire one apprentice, and an additional apprentice for each three additional journeymen, or 1:1, then 1:3. New York and Maine have the same ratio as Connecticut. Massachusetts also has the same ratio, but it also may vary by region according to union contract. In central and western Massachusetts the ratio is stricter than that of Connecticut. In the Worcester area, for example, the ratio is three journeymen for each apprentice (including the first apprentice hired); in the Springfield area, five journeymen to each apprentice. In the Boston area, either one or two journeymen are required for the first apprentice, three journeymen are required for the second apprentice, and either four, five or six journeymen for the third apprentice.

Rhode Island is more liberal with regard to private sector projects, requiring one journeyman for each apprentice (1:1). But Rhode Island is stricter on state and federal work, requiring five journeymen for each apprentice. Vermont also is more liberal than Connecticut, requiring one journeyman for each of the first four apprentices, then three journeymen for each additional apprentice (1:1 for the first four apprentices, then 1:3).

Heating and Cooling Workers

In Connecticut, a licensed heating, cooling and piping contractor may hire one apprentice, and one additional apprentice for each additional three journeymen (1:1, then 1:3). Each of the other states has the same ratio for these workers.



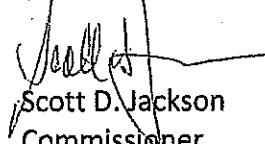
December 20, 2016

Donna A. Sullivan, Service Coordinator
Industrial Drives and Controls
151- 165 Homer St.
Waterbury, CT 06704

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

My decision for ratio relief is based upon the recommendation of the Office of Apprenticeship Training and the State Apprenticeship Council subcommittee that reviews and recommends approvals, denial and partial approvals. After the legal standards relating to journeyperson-to-apprentice ratio set forth in Section 31-51d-5(i) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies were applied to your request, ratio relief has been partially approved for one (1) apprentice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott D. Jackson", is written over a horizontal line.

Scott D. Jackson
Commissioner
CT Department of Labor

cc: Tammie Whiting