



**HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

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*Your Home
Is Our
Business*

**Labor & Public Employees Committee
Public Hearing
Testimony
03/12/2019**

To: Chairwomen Kushner, Porter, Ranking Members Minor, Poletta and distinguished members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee.

From: Jim Perras, CEO Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

Re: **Testimony in support (With Amendments) of Committee Bill No. 5: An Act Establishing A Workforce Pipeline and Jobs Creation Taskforce**

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) is a professional trade association with over eight hundred business members statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our association of small businesses is comprised of residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We build between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut each year and engage in countless home remodeling projects.

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 5, with amendments. If enacted, this bill would establish a workforce pipeline and job creation task force to prepare the state's future workforce for well-paying manufacturing and technical jobs located in Connecticut. The HBRA-CT asks that the Labor Committee consider language to include well-paying residential construction jobs, particularly the licensed trades including plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning. Even though Connecticut is building residential construction at a fraction of the numbers it was seeing prior to 2009 we are experiencing shortages of manpower in these categories. Should the residential construction industry experience a reemergence in the near future the shortage will be even more acute. Ultimately, it will drive housing costs up and exacerbate issues of affordability that are already some of the most severe in the country. In addition, we would recommend that if a taskforce is instituted, that it specifically reserves at least one appointment for an individual with residential construction labor market expertise.

These are truly good paying jobs. Each year the National Association of Home Builders produces a State Wage and Workforce Demand Data.¹ Here a just a couple of examples of average salaries:

¹ <https://www.nahb.org/en/research/housing-economics/construction-statistics/state-and-local/state-wage-and-workforce-demand-data.aspx>

- First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers 81,000
- Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equipment Operators
- Construction and Building Inspectors 62,630
- Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters 59,270

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide **testimony on SB 5.**