

March 17, 2021

Testimony in Support of HB 6617 An Act Concerning Authorization of State Grant Commitments for School Building Projects and Revisions to the School Building Projects Statutes

Co-chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Sanchez, Ranking Members Senator Berthel and Representative McCarty and Honorable Members of the Education Committee:

I am Keith R. Brothers, Business Manager and Secretary/Treasurer of the CT District Council of Laborers. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of HB 6617.

The CT Building Trades is suffering 30% unemployment. Some may be attributable to the pandemic, but most is due to the failure of the State and Nation to come up with job generating infrastructure projects to accommodate those who are already trained and licensed. We support this bill because the funding of school projects will not only provide much needed assistance to school districts on this year's school construction priority list, but it will also result in thousands of desperately needed jobs for the 6,000 men and women that comprise the Laborers in Connecticut.

I have spoken to various committees regarding the importance of investing in our country's infrastructure. Funding of our public school construction is part of that equation. The benefits derived from major investments in infrastructure come in the form of the creation of construction jobs I mentioned, as well as the economic activity the investments generate.

Further, we support efforts by the administration to submit language containing recommended changes to current statutes regarding construction manager self-performance on school construction projects. The amended language would provide that the authorization of a public school district to allow construction managers to self-perform a portion of the work under several conditions.

The addition of this language is necessary to protect the public bidding system and all parties when construction management firms are allowed to self-perform a portion of the work in public schools.

Thank you to the Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and distinguished members of the Education Committee, for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith R. Brothers

Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer of the CT District of Laborers