

Labor and Public Employees Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-418

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING WAGE THEFT.

Vote Date: 3/22/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/15/2022

File No.: 253

Disclaimer: *The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This legislation will allow the Labor Commissioner to issue fines and citations to contractors and subcontractors who violate the state's prevailing wage laws, and to permit the Attorney General to commence a civil action against a contractor or subcontractor who repeatedly violates the state's prevailing wage laws. This will hold contractors and subcontractors to a higher standard, with actionable discipline to punish those who repeatedly offend wage laws. This bill will ensure that employed laborers are compensated adequately for the work they are doing, to support themselves and any dependents they may have.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Office of the Attorney General, Attorney General, William Tong; believes this bill proposes fair and reasonable measures for holding accountable contractors who repeatedly violate the statute and underpay their workers.

Connecticut Department of Labor, Legal Director, Heidi Lane; has concerns about the language of the bill. CTDOL opposes the language of the bill that comprehensively reforms the debarment and prequalification statutes as outlined by the 7 recommendations in the 2020 Task Force to Study Debarment and Limitations on the Awarding of State Contracts report. They wish to settle agreements such as an overall dollar amount of settlements during a certain period.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

The following people believe that the practical initiatives illustrated by the proposed legislation, which are utilized in several surrounding states, would begin the process of addressing long, overdue issues. The following individuals support the bill because they believe there is a need to strengthen current laws for repeat offenders on public works projects and gives the Commissioner of Labor much needed enforcement authority:

Executive Director of The Associated Sheet Metal and Roofing Contractors of Connecticut, Michael Thompson,

President of the Connecticut State Building Trades Council, Keith Brothers,

Director of Government Affairs of Operating Engineers Local 478, Nate Brown,

Local Union 777 Cameron Champlin, Business Manager James Denning,

National Electrical Contractors Association, Bill Finch,

Director of Foundation for Fair Contracting of CT, Kimberly Glassman,

President of Connecticut AFL-CIO, Ed Hawthorne,

Deputy Director of North Atlantic States Carpenters Labor Management Program, Jim Lohr,

President of Barrett Inc., John Lucchesi,

Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 777, Jay More,

Regional Manager of SMART NERC Local 40, John Nimmons,

Legislative Policy Advocate of Connecticut Legal Services, Sara Parker McKernan,

Executive Director of CSBTC, Joseph Toner,

SEIU member Stacey Zimmerman

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

CCIA Inc., John Butts, opposes this bill because it fails to include any consideration of mitigating factors or remedial measures that a contractor may take to correct mistakes or wrongdoings. The provisions must be codified in law or regulation to ensure clarify so that officials can make measured decisions about a contractor's present responsibility to perform a state contract.

Reported by: Molly Lukiwsky

Date: 3/30/2022