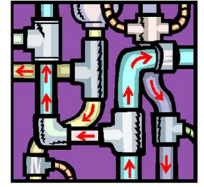


Portland Insulation, Inc.

MECHANICAL INSULATION CONTRACTOR



Testimony of:

Steven M. Libby, President Portland Insulation, Inc.

Opposition to LD 1691 An Act To Require Licensing for Certain Mechanical Trade
Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business
May 13, 2021 9:30 AM

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business.

My name is Steve Libby. I am a resident of New Gloucester and President of Portland Insulation, Inc. and I write in opposition to LD 1691.

I started Portland Insulation 32 years ago and built it to one of the most respected mechanical insulation companies in northern New England. We have been contracted to insulate some of the largest commercial projects ever built in Maine over the years.

Please ask yourself why we need a licensing requirement and review board for these certain trades. You will hear a bunch of reasons why and I can explain why they are all wrong.

Ensure that the individual is qualified to do the work,

All our projects require qualified mechanics, it's in every spec book for every project. All work is inspected and reviewed by design engineers. We are already qualified, creating this license doesn't change that.

It will hold companies accountable.

There's nothing in this legislation that does this. All projects hold retainage until everything is signed off. We are already required to warranty our work. Creating this license does not hold us more accountable.

Improves safety.

There's nothing in this legislation that will improve safety. We are required to follow all Federal, State and Local rules and regulations now. This includes all OSHA requirements such as OSHA 10 and OSHA 40. All projects require safety meetings, trainings and inspections. We are already safe, this license does not make us more safe.

Board will deal with any problems that arise, such as complaints.

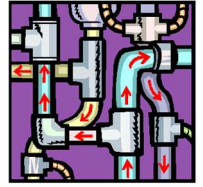
Projects already have a process in the specifications that address this. A license board will only add another layer and process for us.

This bill will protect the health and welfare of citizens who use public facilities.

This point really frustrates me. It sounds like our projects are unsafe because I don't have a license in my pocket. Public facilities require an engineer's stamp. If, for some strange reason, a project is designed "unsafe", it's the contractor that corrects it.

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Public can search for licensed individuals and companies.

So, we need to create this license system to be found? Good old fashion web search works pretty good and doesn't cost the tax payers anything.

Those are some of the points you might hear why you should consider supporting the bill. Now you need to ask yourself, what will actually happen if you pass this bill.

Unstable employment market getting worse.

The workforce is the worst I've seen it in 32 years. Every year more and more requirements get piled on. I understand the new OSHA requirements but it's very costly. Now all the covid stuff that is here forever. This licensing requirement, with no benefit, will just add to the pile, increase cost and decrease the workforce.

Another state agency adds costs.

Another licensing board that has no benefit is costly to all of us.

The labor pool will shrink.

My biggest stumbling block for 32 years has been the difficulty to find help. This bill will make it about impossible. Nobody wants to work.

The licensing requirements are confusing.

My office manager read the bill and said she doesn't have the time to figure it out. Companies will need to add staff just for this process, with no benefit.

In closing, if this licensing requirement was in place 32 years ago I wouldn't have bothered to start my business. And if you pass this now, I will seriously consider quitting. I can't find help, I've been trying for 9 months continuous and not one person has applied. Add this process and my small crew will quit and my office manager will say no. I can't bid jobs now without help. Pass this and how will I be able to go forward? I assume the labor unions like this bill but they can't fill contracts now. This will only make things worse.

Please think about the unintended consequences if this bill is passed!

I would love to discuss this further. I can be reached at 576-2416 and stevenmlibby@portlandinsulation.net

Thank you for your time.

Steven M. Libby

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