

May 13, 2021

Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business

Clerk: Jody Breton

RE: Bill LD 1691 an Act to Require Licensing for Certain Mechanical Trades

Dear Chair Senator Chip Curry and House Chair Tiffany Roberts and Honorable Committee Members,

Hello my name is Don Nazaroff and I live in Greene, ME. I represent Sheet Metal Workers Local 17 and I have been in the trade for 35 years.

Thank you for hearing my Testimony concerning LD 1691 and I am in strong support of this very important Bill and hope you will be as well.

Sheet Metal Workers work on dry mechanical which is most often thought of as the ductwork for air handling systems' for heating, air conditioning and ventilation air.

Mechanical Licensing would help to insure work is done properly and in a safe manner which translates into cost effectiveness. A well-educated trained Sheet Metal Worker is a value for all people living in Maine. The importance for the proper ductwork and proper installation of it will affect all the people who live, work and learn in our State.

Sheet Metal Workers Local 17 knows the importance of training. We have a four year Apprentice Training Program (Registered with the State of Maine) with 8,000 hours of intense classroom, field and shop training. We have a Training Institute that provides certification in a growing development of Standards, Specifications and Guidelines for Modern Sheet Metal. Training is very important to all Trades or crafts; Woodworkers use a tool similar to that of a Dentist but I wouldn't call them Dentists or would I want any Dental care from a Woodworker. I say this jokingly manner, but also, as a way to call our attention to the importance of having the right person for the right job.

A lot of jobsites I visit, I come in to contact with people who have no training, no experience whatsoever in construction. A lot of company's are now relying on Labor ready folks to do construction that have no safety training , no idea how HVAC is installed.

I would like to give a few examples of things I have run into concerning things being done by people in my Trade whom I believe should be certified, licensed people.

I have been many jobsites to witness things such as: Ductliner, when improperly handled. When ripped and not repaired ductliner is very dangerous to people who will inevitably be breathing it in. Ductliner has fiberglass in it just like fiberglass insulation in the walls of your house. Ductliner is in the supply ducts in many buildings such as offices, stores, schools etc...Indoor air quality has been identified by the U.S. Environmental Agency as a key issue for environmental health in the U.S.. People spent a lot of time indoors and often the level of indoor contaminants in the air exceeds those of the outdoors.

Grease Duct: I witnessed grease duct being installed in a brand new elementary school that was not to specification. IE,. Not welded, and not hung correctly. Grease duct is a very common call for fires and that is why it is supposed to be welded. I reported problem this to the Superintendent of Schools and he was relieved I reported it to him, which he then contacted the Clerk of the Works on the project. This is a huge life safety example right here in a State of Maine Tax Payer funded School.

Just one more example: Fire Dampers improperly installed in Ductwork; I have witnessed a lot of issues concerning specifications not followed when it comes to the installation of fire dampers. Fire Dampers upside down, in the wrong spot, screws put in wrong preventing the Damper of not working properly and access doors for inspection either not put in at all or not in the correct place. Not having a fire damper installed properly can literally mean life or death in people trying to escape a burning building. This is a serious Fire Life Safety issue.

All these examples given could have been avoided by having Trained Licensed people doing the work. The worst part about the examples I gave is the all the ones that have gone unseen.

In closing, I ask that you support the Sunrise Review for Mechanical Licensing for the people of Maine. I believe strongly that this Bill will help insure that the air we breathe will be better, the safety and proper installation of Mechanical Systems will work to keep Mainers healthy. Also this Bill would help to stimulate the economy by having a pathway to a great career, providing a well trained workforce to the men and women who will work and spend their money here benefitting them and Maine. Thank You...

Respectfully,

Don Nazaroff

Greene, ME

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