

New England Regional Council of Carpenters, AFL-CIO
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

CARPENTERS LOCAL 349 & 352

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John M. Leavitt
Business Manager

January 12, 2024

IDEA Committee

Senator Chip Curry	Representative Amanda Collamore	Representative Caleb Ness
Senator Stacey Guerin	Representative Ed Crockett	Representative dan Sayre
Senator Joseph Rafferty	Representative Lucas Lanigan	Representative Katrina Smith
Representative Tiffany Roberts	Representative Raegan LaRochelle	Representative Mark Walker
		Representative Bruce White

RE: LD 1929 “An Act to Protect Consumers by Licensing Home Building Contractors”

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Committee,

My name is John Leavitt, Business Manager for Carpenters Union Locals 349 & 352. Please accept this testimony in support of LD 1929 as I/we believe not having a licensing process to protect the residents of Maine with their biggest investment is acting irresponsible.

We have supported a statewide building code in 2004/2008 to allow the state to incorporate a licensing process to regulate the home building industry. This is not to prevent contractors from doing business but to hold contractors to an acceptable standard of construction.

Licenses are required for driving, fishing, hunting, hairdressers etc., In the trades electricians and plumbers are licensed, yet the structures they perform their work in is not looked at. The licensing process is to provide the people of Maine with contractors who have proven that they are capable of performing home construction to a standard acceptable throughout the industry. This will save homeowners overall by assuring them they are purchasing a home that is constructed with the correct material for structural integrity and weather tight to industry standards.

Reputable home builders repeatedly support licensing to level the playing field in residential construction market as they are forced to compete with fly by night contractors who operate under the radar with no repercussions. When issues arise with the homeowner these contractors are nowhere to be found or the homeowner has no recourse from being swindled by builders who deliberately overpromised and underdelivered.

The test for a builder’s license is an open book process which if passed shows that the person constructing a home is aware of proper construction methods and materials required to build a house. If they chose not to adhere to these methods, they will be held accountable.

This is how most trades are recognized. Licensing protects contractors who are performing to industry standards to remain in business. Requiring a level of competence to for a home builder to protect the consumer of their home should the minimum standard by the lawmakers of Maine to protect their constituents and allow the home building industry to thrive by excluding the fly by night workers who have taken advantage of so many people over the years.

For these reasons I urge you to support and pass LD 1929

Thank you for your time.

I would be happy to attend any work shops and answer any questions.

Sincerely,
John M Leavitt
207-252-4800
jleavitt@nercc.org

John Leavitt
Portland
LD 1998

Please accept my testimony in support of LD 1929
Thank you
John Leavitt