



House Bill 6445, An Act Expanding Economic Opportunity in Occupations Licensed By the Department of Consumer Protection

General Law Committee
February 23, 2021

The Associated Sheet Metal & Roofing Contractors of Connecticut (ASMRCC) is an association of commercial, industrial and residential sheet metal contractors employing the skilled craftsmen of Locals #40 and #38 of the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers International Union and also Locals #9 and #12 of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers, and Allied Workers. ASMRCC seeks to provide services that will enhance members' businesses, markets and profitability in all sectors of the sheet metal, HVAC, and roofing industry in Connecticut and vicinity.

ASMRCC is **opposed** to House Bill 6445 and respectfully requests that the committee not act on the bill. House Bill 6445, which was introduced on behalf of the Governor to implement the budget, requires the Department of Consumer Protection to issue occupational licenses, permits and registrations to persons who move to Connecticut who have met several reciprocal conditions for holding the certification in another state.

House Bill 6445 is intended to remove barriers to workforce entry and expand and expedite access to licensed occupations for current and incoming residents, including military spouses. ASMRCC supports these goals, however, the bill is flawed because it does not do enough to ensure that the standards an applicant may have met in another jurisdiction are equivalent to Connecticut's nor does it have a sufficient role for the occupational licensing boards in reviewing applications for licensure.

Our state's occupational licensing laws are designed to implement standards and achieve workplace conditions that are unique to the state in order to protect consumers and the public safety. Understanding codes and standards in another state in order to pass an exam for certification here are not necessarily sufficient to protect Connecticut residents. On the job training of apprentices in addition to rigorous classroom instruction are designed to ensure that they learn and understand the specific skills of a trade and that the applicant is qualified for an occupational license here.

House Bill 6445 does not provide a sufficient role for the occupational licensing boards to oversee the process of ensuring applicants for an occupational license meet Connecticut's workplace standards. The boards, which are comprised of industry experts representing labor and management, were established to ensure that applicants understand Connecticut's building and fire safety codes, procedures and standards and know how work is performed in the state. They are designed to protect consumers in Connecticut.

Additionally, the bill would allow any occupational license holder in any state in the country who has held the license for only one year to come to Connecticut and sit for a licensing exam here. This would undermine Connecticut's occupational licensing program and pose significant problems for the construction industry. Construction industry jobs are very dangerous despite training and instruction for workers. Strong licensing standards under Connecticut's law helps determine qualified persons who can sit for examinations here and keep workers and the public safe.

Please contact Michael Thompson, Executive Director of ASMRCC, at (860) 413-9447, for additional information or any questions.