

Labor and Public Employees Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6378

Title: AN ACT CODIFYING PREVAILING WAGE CONTRACT RATES.

Vote Date: 2/18/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/9/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill removes several inefficient and time-consuming requirements that add no value to the current process of posting prevailing wage rates. The U.S.DOL has not been timely or reliable in updating their wage determinations and this has led to delays and unnecessary confusion for contractors. It is a common-sense proposal because it seeks to protect CT's construction industry.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[DAVID HUNT, CIEA PRESIDENT, CT IRON WORKERS EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION](#)

It is critically important to protect the integrity of CT's prevailing wage law. This is not a measure to expand prevailing wage protections into other areas or arbitrarily raise wages. It is meant to simply protect the current law.

[JIM LOHR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NORTH ATLANTIC STATES CARPENTERS LABOR-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM](#)

Administratively, this bill will make it easier to address the delays in posting new collective bargaining rates that can result from waiting for the federal government to process and change to the agreements. Jurisdictional disputes are not uncommon in the construction industry between various trades. They suggest adding the following language that is commonly found in many construction agreements and is considered an industry standard.

Lines 24-25 be changed to:"the dominant collective bargaining agreement, as determined by area practice, shall prevail". Their other concern is that the bill only codifies changes for prevailing rate contract rates for the heavy or highway and building sectors. It does not include public area.

[BRIAN W. DUNN, BUSINESS MANAGER, Local Union 669](#)

This bill is a preventative measure. Over half the prevailing wage states in the nation accept the CBA rates when determining their prevailing wage rate. This is a good government proposal that will protect the construction industry from mismanagement and artificially driven wages.

[BILL FINCH, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION CT., LABOR MANAGEMENT COOPERATION COMMITTEE](#)

This law enables CT contractors to use the numbers they have supplied to the feds rather than wait for that exact same number to be reported back to them by the federal government. Electrical contractors, and the electricians who work for them, will be saved from unnecessary bookkeeping headaches.

[KIMBERLY GLASSMAN, DIRECTOR, FOUNDATION FOR FAIR CONTRACTING OF CT](#)

It is critically important that this bill passes now to protect the integrity of our state's prevailing wage law. It is not a measure to expand prevailing wage protections into other areas or to arbitrarily raise wages. It is meant to protect the current law. This is nothing radical. Over half of the prevailing wage states in the nation accept the CBA rates when determining their prevailing wage rate.

[GARRY GYENIZS, BUSINESS MANAGER, PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL UNION OF COOPERATING ENGINEERS, LOCAL 478](#)

This bill removes several inefficient and time-consuming requirements that add no value to the current process of posting the prevailing wage rates. The Connecticut Department of Labor must update the prevailing wage rates every July 1st. What that means is that the U.S. Department of Labor must also update any rates to reflect any escalations or changes to a classification. Unfortunately, however, the U.S. DOL has not been timely or reliable in updating their wage determinations. This has led to administrative delays within the CT DOL and to unnecessary confusion for contractors.

[BRIAN ANDERSON, LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR, COUNCIL 4 AFSME](#)

CT construction workers are under heavy economic stress. Some trade locals have employment rates as high as 50%. CT need to maintain a trained and professional force of trades people. Codifying the federal prevailing rates determined by the market does this.

[STEPHEN ANDERSON, PRESIDENT, CSEA SEIU LOCAL 2001](#)

This bill will protect our state's construction workers from any attempt to artificially drive down wages and ensure the construction industry remains a crucial part of our state's economic landscape.

[KEITH BROTHERS, BUSINESS MANAGER/SECRETARY TREASURER, CT LABORERS' DISTRICT COUNCIL](#)

Neighboring states have little or no prevailing wage thresholds which induces their members to seek work there. This is not helpful during a time when our state needs every qualified

worker to rebuild our infrastructure and major projects. This would be a more efficient method of determining and applying the prevailing wage.

[MICHAEL THOMPSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATED SHEET METAL & ROOFING CONTRACTORS OF CONNECTICUT](#)

The current method for processing prevailing wage postings is inefficient, cumbersome, time consuming and prone to error. By removing the intermediary, this bill would allow organizations and bargaining units to work directly with CTDOT in a more efficient and timely manner.

[DON SHUBERT, CT CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION, INC.](#)

Along with CCIA, there are other associations or bargaining units participating in the current cumbersome scheme that represent various building trades, Other states have prevailing wage laws that operate in a far more efficient and CT should follow their procedures as well.

[CAMERON CHAMPLIN, LOBBIEST, PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS LOCAL LUNION 777](#)

He told of his personal experiences starting with an apprenticeship in 1965 which went on to a successful career as business manager for his local union. He is very familiar with collective bargaining and said this bill will make the posting of current prevailing wage sooner and ensure all bidders will have the correct information for filing bids.

[CARL CHISEM, PRESIDENT, CONNECTICUT EMPLOYEES UNION INDEPENDENT, SEIU LOCAL 511](#)

Prevailing wage laws ensure that hourly wages paid to construction workers are maintained to prevent low bid construction projects from destabilizing the local economy and to advance workforce development. This bill would guarantee the collective bargaining rate is the market rate.

[MICHAEL A. D'AMICO, INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE, IBEW SECOND DISTRICT](#)

As written, this bill would not artificially raise wages or expand the current prevailing wage rate protections. It would streamline the current administrative process. Strong prevailing wage laws and protections are crucial to building and replenishing our workforce and economy. Strong laws would help young people consider the construction industry as a viable career path.

[JAMES DENNING, BUSINESS AGENT, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BRIDGE, STRUCTURAL, ORNAMENTAL AND REINFORCING IRON WORKERS, LOCAL UNION # 15](#)

This bill is a good government proposal that will protect our state's construction industry from mismanagement within the U.S. DOL and from any attempts to artificially drive down wages.

[JOHN DeROSA, INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS, LOCAL 91](#)

The CTDOL must update the prevailing wage rates every July 1st, and the U.S. DOL must do the same to reflect any escalations or changes to a classification. The U.S. DOL has not been timely or reliable in updating their wage determinations which led to administrative delays within the CTDOL and unnecessary confusion for contractors. This bill would help this situation.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[BETSY GARA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CT COUNCIL OF SMALL TOWNS](#)

COST urges lawmakers to oppose this bill because it would dramatically increase the cost of state and municipal construction projects, including schools, fire houses, public safety complexes and other critical projects. This bill flies in the face of the economic realities that are facing our towns and cities. They encourage increasing the project thresholds for renovations that trigger prevailing wage requirements. Numerous studies confirm prevailing wage laws artificially inflate construction costs. Towns are finding that due to the small size and duration of these projects, such as salt sheds, town garages, sidewalks and curb reconstruction, large in-state contractors are not bidding and small local contractors are steering clear of smaller prevailing wage jobs due to the cumbersome administrative requirement.

Reported by: Marie Knudsen, Assistant Clerk Date: 3/9/2021