

Please post.

From: Tim Watkins <tim@ibewlocal300.org>

Sent: Thursday, March 1, 2018 9:38 AM

To: Maida Townsend

Cc: Rob LaClair; Warren Kitzmiller; Jessica Brumsted; Dennis Devereux; John Gannon; Marcia Gardner; James Harrison; Patti Lewis; Tristan Toleno; Cindy Weed; Black, John

Subject: H.827

Good morning Representative Townsend,

My name is Tim Watkins and I am writing to you on the subject of House Bill H.827. Unfortunately, my schedule will not permit me to attend today's hearing on the bill, so I elected to provide my input to you and the Committee through this email.

I am a Journeyman Electrician, licensed in the State of Vermont since 1983. I reside in Colchester, Vermont and I currently serve the State as a member of the Vermont Electricians' Licensing Board. In fact, I have served as the journeyman electrician representative since 1989. This is a responsibility I have always taken very seriously, since the primary duty of the Board is to protect the safety and interests of the citizens of Vermont. The Board members do this by ensuring that only qualified electricians are issued licenses in our State.

One of the provisions of the rules and laws related to electrician licensure in Vermont is the privilege granted to electricians from other states to obtain a Vermont electrician license, without completing the required examination, provided they hold a similar license in a state that grants a similar privilege to Vermont electricians. This is done under what we refer to as a reciprocal agreement between the states. Vermont currently has such an agreement with two other states; New Hampshire and Maine.

A key provision of the reciprocal agreement between the states is that the privilege of obtaining an electrician's license through reciprocity is a one-time opportunity. Neither New Hampshire nor Maine allow electricians to obtain a license in their state, without examination, if the requesting license holder has previously been granted the same license through the reciprocal agreement. In my tenure with the Board, this has always been the policy for Vermont, as well. Should H.827 be enacted, that provision would become null and void, creating an imbalance in the reciprocal agreement between the states.

Frankly, I don't feel it is appropriate to jeopardize the integrity of a longstanding reciprocal agreement between three New England states, simply to accommodate the needs of a few electricians, who for one reason or another have allowed their reciprocal license to lapse. The answer for those individuals is to apply for licensure in Vermont, the same way any other electrician from another non-reciprocal state would and take the examination. If they cannot pass the examination, they should not be practicing at the trade anyway. Especially in Vermont.

Respectfully,

Tim Watkins
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