



OHIO STATE ASSOCIATION
Of the
United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices
Of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry
AFL-CIO
OhioPipeTrades.com

Chairman Mark Johnson
Ohio House
Commerce & Labor Committee
41 S High Street
Columbus Ohio 43215

Chairman Johnson, Vice Chair Manchester, Ranking Member McNally, and members of the Commerce & Labor Committee:

My name is Richard Ochocki, Lead Organizer Ohio State Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters. I stand here before you to testify in support of HB 327. Our organization consists of over 14,000 plumbers and pipefitters who go to work every day in Ohio to make a living for their families. Also, we have 15 Organizers throughout the State of Ohio engaging with construction workers in our great State daily.

We are in support of this bill because the flow of undocumented workers to Ohio has been steadily increasing over my five and a half years as an organizer. I have personally encountered undocumented workers in Cleveland, Canton, Ashland, Lima, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Columbus. In June of 2023 on one of our organizing blitzes, I was accompanied by a UA bilingual organizer. We spent over 3 hours on a large apartment and condominium complex here in Columbus. In those 3 hours we were unsuccessful in finding one worker performing HVAC and Plumbing work that was documented. As you know, a legally documented worker is paying into our tax system. Their employers are paying into workers compensation, unemployment, social security and more. For every undocumented worker we are robbing our state and municipalities of tax dollars and allowing the contractors that are playing by the rules to be undercut by labor brokers. This creates a race to the bottom in Ohio.

Many contractors in the state both Union and Open shop are already utilizing the E-Verify Program. It is a simple and effective tool to make sure all construction workers in Ohio are working legally.

I want to be clear that our organization seeks to represent workers of all races, creeds, colors and religion. This bill is in no way shape or form to disparage anyone other than the contractors that are cheating the system and exploiting a workforce hiding in the shadows. This is not a union bill or a non-union bill. This is a worker bill, a taxpayer bill, and a bill that will strengthen and grow our communities. I strongly urge your support for HB 327.

Richard Ochocki
Lead Organizer
Ohio State Association