



Founded 1889

## *United Association* of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada

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Chairman Koehler, Vice-Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Ingram and members of the Ohio Senate Workforce Development Committee.

My name is Kelly Lipinski, I am the former Lead Organizer for the Ohio State Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters. I'm currently a Special Representative with the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters in the Organizing and Recruitment Department. On behalf of our 14,000 members in Ohio and in support of every construction worker in Ohio I am pleased to testify in favor of House Bill 246. HB 246 discourages unscrupulous Contractors, Labor Brokers and/or Human Traffickers from undercutting the wages and benefits of every honest, tax paying worker providing for their family while supporting their community.

In Ohio we have 15 full time Organizers covering every inch of the State. These 15 Organizers spend their entire work week visiting jobsites and talking to workers. In April 2022 we brought in bilingual Organizers and for two weeks 24 Organizers visited every jobsite possible and spoke to every Plumber and Pipefitter we could find in Columbus. Of the 573 Plumbers and Pipefitters that gave us their contact information 30% of these workers were undocumented. Undocumented workers were mainly in the Commercial sector of our Industry.

In June 2023 we brought in 160 Organizers for a week and visited every jobsite and talked to every Plumber and Pipefitter we could find in Ohio. It was alarming to find out that a little over a year later we found that undocumented workers were in most major cities in Ohio. (Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Lima, Canton, Akron and Toledo) and present in every sector (Residential, Commercial and Industrial) of our Industry.

As a Lead Organizer and Special Representative for the United Association I have participated in new Organizer training twice a year at our Headquarters in Annapolis MD. As part of our training, we visit jobsites in Baltimore and Washington DC talking to workers. In five years, I am yet to



find an English-speaking worker. The undocumented worker issue in Maryland is rampant and out of control. My counterpart in Maryland has a team of Organizers who speak to undocumented workers every day, they often hear from these workers that they are moving to Ohio because of the amount of work in Ohio. We must address the undocumented worker issue that is growing in Ohio by the minute. Many contractors in our state already use the e verify program successfully. Thank you for your consideration and support of this crucial HB 246.

Kelly Lipinski

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