

Testimony of Norman Martin
Schindler Elevator Corporation
Proponent of HB 107
Senate General Government Budget Committee
April 5, 2022

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Craig and members of the Senate General Government Budget Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 107- the Ohio Elevator Safety Bill.

My name is Norman Martin. I am employed by Schindler Elevator Corporation as a Codes and Standards Officer. It is my job to interface with various Authorities Having Jurisdiction across the USA and Canada.

Prior to my employment with Schindler Elevator, I served as Chief Elevator Inspector for the State of Ohio, a position from which I retired after 30 years of service.

Schindler is a member of the National Elevator Industry, Inc. or NEII, the national trade association representing the major elevator manufacturers. Collectively, NEII member companies represent approximately 85% of the total work hours in the industry and all have a large footprint here in Ohio.

My remarks today are on behalf of NEII but I also intend to draw upon my experience overseeing Ohio's elevator program.

The safety of workers and the riding public is a top priority of NEII and all its member companies. For that reason, I am here today to speak in favor of HB 107 and discuss the importance of licensed elevator mechanics.

The rationale behind HB 107 is straightforward. Elevators are extremely complex pieces of equipment and its absolutely necessary for the safety of both workers and elevator passengers in Ohio that those working on them are trained properly and demonstrate a fundamental competency.

Schindler and all of the other NEII member companies already ensure that their workers are adequately educated and trained according to nationally accredited standards, even in states that do not enforce any baseline licensing requirements for elevator mechanic. The problem arises when other companies hire employees without comparable training or a building owner uses its own in-house contractor to perform elevator work. This exposes the untrained worker, other industry personnel, inspectors and the riding public to potentially dangerous equipment.

During my time as Chief in Ohio, I remember plenty of accidents that resulted from mechanics being untrained and unqualified. Taking just one as an example, a mechanic was fatally injured in Akron when the elevator came down on him while he was working in the pit. This accident happened because the mechanic was not trained in the proper way to support the elevator while

working underneath it. An accident like this might have been prevented had the mechanic undergone the proper education and training.

I want to make clear that I am not here today to advocate for any one specific training program. It is incorrect to portray this bill as being exclusive by imposing a mandate that all industry personnel go through the union's training program. HB 107 supports the non-union counterpart as well, the Certified Elevator Technician program—provided by the National Association of Elevator Contractors. Requiring mechanics to complete either of these training programs offers a significant opportunity for the State to increase the safety and reliability of its elevators.

I also want to express my strong support for the creation of an Elevator Board. Tasked with enforcing the narrow functions outlined in HB 107 , a board full of industry experts, labor reps., members of the public and government officials, is both knowledgeable enough to fully understand the issues and diverse enough to ensure the proper checks and balances.

Before taking questions, I want to reiterate my full support of HB 107. On behalf of NEII, Schindler and as a former Chief, I urge the committee to adopt licensing requirements and protect Ohio's elevator workers and passengers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I look forward to answering any of your questions.