

May 12, 2021

Ref. Senate Bill 142, Residential Licensing for Building Trades

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing me to address you today. My name is Scott Haring and I am a Residential Replacement Specialist for an Ohio commercially licensed heating and cooling company in Columbus. This is my 13th year in this role and I could tell you some hair-raising stories of poor workmanship by unlicensed contractors that I've encountered. Issues risking life and safety, namely improper venting of exhaust - and its Carbon Monoxide that can be fatal.

Because nearly every vocation requires a license: to take money from clients as a barber, lawyer, doctor, homeowners are surprised to learn there is not a license requirement for residential furnace or water heater replacement. We need to respect these appliances; controlled as they are, it is still potentially a deadly fire in your house.

I understand the reluctance to "add legislation." This law is not to be a "barrier to entry" for contractors, but rather a tool for accountability. The license-holder at each contracting company must have the proper training, as well as knowing the possible consequences of having his or her license revoked. Any company that provides residential heating and cooling, or water heater services should be proud to secure a license and maintain it with required continuing education.

Homeowners may do their own work, so long as it is code-compliant. Most municipalities require homeowners to purchase a permit in advance and schedule an inspection after completion of the work. Local inspectors can catch some installation errors, but not all, and none when a permit is not pulled.

In 2019, Senate Bill 255 was signed into law requiring license for Home Inspectors in Ohio. I find it ironic that a license is now required for inspectors who are documenting a home's mechanical systems, but not the contractors installing these systems?

Ask yourself if the public would appreciate knowing the appliances installed in their home, or next door, were installed by a licensed contractor, rather than just a company? I could speak for much longer, since this is what I do every day, but in the interest of time, our comments have to be limited, but I would be more than happy to answer any questions the committee members might have

Thank you very much for this opportunity to briefly discuss a topic I consider of such importance.

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APPENDIX

<https://www.com.ohio.gov/real/HomeInspectors.aspx>

Home Inspector Program Overview

- [Senate Bill 255](#) was signed into law on Jan. 4, 2019, creating the Home Inspector Program, to be headed up by the Department of Commerce's Division of Real Estate & Professional Licensing.
- Part of the new program establishes home inspector licensure in Ohio, adding a crucial layer of regulation previously missing from the home buying process.
- The responsibilities of regulating the home inspector industry include:
 - Adopting rules, including a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, which guide licensees' delivery of services;
 - Determining the education and experience required for obtaining a home inspector license;
 - Determining and monitoring continuing education requirements;
 - Approving both pre-licensing and continuing education curricula and providers;
 - Administering the duties and operation of the Ohio Home Inspector Board;
 - Administering enforcement duties including investigation of complaints against licensed home inspectors; and
 - Investigating allegations of unlicensed activity.
- **Requires licensure for individuals wishing to perform home inspections in Ohio.**
 - It also lays out certain requirements that Ohio-licensed home inspectors will have to follow, such as: having a written contract between the licensee and the client before work is performed, requiring that a written report of the home inspection be provided, having a records retention of five years for certain documentation, etc.
- **Creates the Ohio Home Inspector Board (OHIB).**
 - This board will exist within the Division of Real Estate & Professional Licensing to regulate the licensure and performance of home inspectors. The seven-member board will be required to adopt rules related to standards for conducting home inspections, education and experience requirements, prohibitions against conflicts of interest, etc. Disciplinary hearings and appeals of Superintendent decisions fall under the authority of this board. Five members will be Ohio-licensed home inspectors appointed by Gov. Mike DeWine. The two remaining members are both consumer advocates; one appointed by the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, the other by the Ohio Senate President.

Qualifications to Provide a Peer Review

https://www.com.ohio.gov/documents/real_HI_PeerReview.pdf

"...five (5) years experience..."