



Proponent Testimony House Bill 88

Chairman Stein, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee:

My name is Tom Shreves and I am Executive Director of the Greater Cleveland Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). NECA represents both large and small signatory contractors who operate largely in the commercial and industrial marketplace. I am writing today in support of HB 88, legislation sponsored by Representative Tom Patton, that would require licensing of commercial roofing contractors in the state of Ohio by the Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board (OCILB).

In Ohio, electrical contractors have been licensed for over 20 years, and as a “regulated industry” I want to share with you that the experience has been extraordinarily positive for both my contractors and their customers. For too long, the legislature has viewed licensing as a dirty word. In reality, licensing ensures high quality services, competitive pricing, and most importantly, quality and safety. Regardless of your political or philosophical persuasion, these should be outcomes that the legislature strives to ensure for their constituents.

Make no mistake, the construction industry is a dangerous place. It is inexplicable to me that the folks who cut your hair must obtain a license from the state, but the companies who put roofs over your heads that have the potential to collapse or leak and cause considerable damage to your home and health, have no such obligation. As electrical contractors, we have sought for years to put these same regulations and protections in place not just on contractors, but for electricians as well. Yet a philosophical objection to licensing has always inhibited our efforts.

This is nonsense and must stop. The legislature should realize the tremendous value that *sensible and reasonable* regulations afford. HB 88 provides just such provisions. I encourage this committee to support HB 88 and pass it to the House floor for further consideration.