



LOCAL 18

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Honorable Kristina Roegner
Senate Government Oversight Committee
Statehouse Rm. 142
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, and Ranking Minority Member Hicks-Hudson:

The International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 18, is made up of approximately 16,000 professional men and women who operate heavy equipment in all aspects of construction here in Ohio.

In 1939 our International Union amalgamated six (6) operating engineers locals in Ohio into one operating engineer local, which became Local 18. The reason for this was to allow our members and our contractors to mobilize to any part of our jurisdiction to supply Ohio's Heavy Highway and Building Industries with skilled, professional, and safe heavy equipment operators. Our jurisdiction covers eighty-five (85) counties in Ohio and four (4) northern counties in Kentucky.

In total, Local 18 invests over \$12 million per year in our Apprenticeship Program to provide training to Operating Engineers so they will have the skills needed to have a successful career in Ohio's Construction Industry. In partnership with the Ohio Contractor's Association and the Associated General Contractors of Ohio, we provide state-of-the-art training in four (4) all-weather training centers in Logan, Richfield, Cygnet, and Miamisburg, Ohio. Our members log more than 200,000 training hours in nearly 50 courses per year.

We believe it is an industry responsibility to train the next generation of Ohio's construction workforce. Our apprentices in our four-year program must log at least 160 hours per year at the training site and complete 1,000 hours of on-the-job training per year. Additionally, apprentices must demonstrate proficiency on one machine per year in order to upgrade to journeyman status by the end of their fourth (4th) year.

Each year thousands of these highly skilled men and women of Local 18 are employed on projects by contractors who have been awarded public construction contracts through Ohio's competitive bidding process. These members live and work in Ohio, and their hard-earned dollars go directly back into Ohio's economy daily.

We support openness, competitiveness, and transparency in Ohio's commercial construction and public procurement laws. Ohio's construction procurement laws are intended to encourage competitive processes for the award of contracts, transparencies for the general public (taxpayers) and those working on the project, as well as protections for owners, contractors, and workers.

Therefore, our organization strongly opposes S.B. 23.

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony on this important issue to our members and contractors.

Respectfully,

Michael R. Bertolone
Local 18, Business Manager