

March 22, 2016 Testimony for the Labor & Industry Council

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Members of the Committee:

It is my contention that we are definitely not in compliance with the US DOL Apprenticeship regulations because of one simple fact; Pennsylvania does not have a 1:1 Apprentice to Journeyworker ratio. Conversely, Pennsylvania has the worst Apprentice to Journeyworker ratio in the nation.

You will hear testimony today from PA DOL staff and even the ATC President presenting an argument to the contrary and while I have a great deal of respect for my colleagues, they are incorrect and advocating to maintain the unfair monopoly that they enjoy.

Other testimony will offer that there is a 4:1 ration of Apprentice to Journeyworker and that is indeed correct. But what you might not know is that ratio does not apply to the Union contractor force. This unfair 1:1 ratio allows Union contractors a competitive edge in the cost to perform the same job as a private contracting firm. You might hear reasons such as safety and training as an explanation for this disparity. But there is no empirical data to substantiate that claim and the fact the US DOL is comfortable with a 1:1 ratio should dispel that myth.

You will hear that the Council is working well and should not be reduced to an advisory board and that changing the scope of the committee would be political and controlled by the Governor. I would contend that the opinion that the council is "working well" because Union representation has had the majority voting rights in the 5 years that I have served and predominately through the life of this council. If you do not believe this is true, ask a council representative how many private contractors that applied for a change to a 1:1 ratio were granting that request in the last 5 years. The answer is none, although dozens have applied. That is simply because there is a majority of Union representation on the board. Regarding the danger of politicizing the committee if the structure is changed; currently the Governor appoints the members to the board. So this is no different than what is being proposed.

I urge you to move these bills out of committee so the mis-truths can be vetted in a larger forum.

Please contact me if I can be of further.

Respectfully submitted:

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