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Dear Chairwoman Harhart and Chairman Readshaw and the members of the Professional Licensure Committee:

My name is David LeRoy, President of David LeRoy Plumbing, Inc. Please accept my written testimony in support of HB-1357, the State Licensure of Plumbers. I have been through extensive schooling in the plumbing industry both as a civilian and in the military. I have been working in the industry over 30 years. I have owned my plumbing Company for nearly 18 years, every year I see more and more potentially hazardous - possibly life threatening installations of plumbing systems as the consumer thinks less and less of our trade. I believe much of this is caused by the fact that anybody can call themselves a plumber with no way for the average person to tell the difference. I share with you a secret "poor plumbing practices can kill" it seems nobody knows this anymore, yet our ancestors knew this oh too well and therefore adopted the plumbing codes and licensing practice.

State licensing, as proposed in this bill will make finding a qualified plumber easier for consumers. This will not eliminate, but will surely reduce poor workmanship and be a huge step toward future improvements as new plumbers entering the industry will require training and meet minimum standards through testing. Under this proposal current licensed plumbers such as myself will be grandfathered in so it won't put any legitimate plumbers out of work.

I can think of two recent incidents where my Company has corrected potential life threatening situations; one where a customer paid a contractor to put a bathroom in the basement, the contractor connected the sewer vent pipe to the bathroom exhaust fan pipe, there could have been an explosion due to the build of highly explosive sewer gasses in the small bathroom if the switch were thrown at a wrong time. Another customer had a gas water heater installed using plastic exhaust pipe for a heater that required metal pipe due to the high temperature flue gasses. Somebody could have died from carbon monoxide poisoning had our trained technician not found it.

Every State around Pennsylvania requires plumbers to be licensed. I don't even try to cross borders to say Maryland near where I do business because they consider us to be

unqualified. It would do wonders for our commerce if we could work there and this license would be a step toward making that happen.

I currently need to purchase a separate license for each town we do work in. One State license would be a whole lot simpler and I would be willing to pay more for this convenience which in turn would push more revenue to the State to use for many good causes such as education and other public welfare programs.

It's always been well known that "The plumber protects the health of the nation" examples of this can be seen in every third world country. Our industry is currently being threatened by the times and professional plumbers could someday be practically non-existent. I worry that when that happens there will be another epidemic and history will repeat itself. You and I will likely be long gone by then but I still do not wish these problems on future generations. It is our duty to protect our State from this looming disaster and make the Plumbing Industry one our children and workers can again be proud to enter.

In closing, I again ask you to please support the passage of House Bill #1357 as I feel it is an important step to not only protect the consumers of the Commonwealth but to promote the business interest of all Professional Plumbers and Plumbing Contractors in the State of Pennsylvania.

Respectfully,  
David V. LeRoy  
President at David LeRoy Plumbing, Inc.

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