



PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

December 2, 2015

The Honorable Julie Harhart  
Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
313 Main Capitol Building  
PO Box 202183  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2183

Representative Harhart:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 1357 (*PN 1904*) on behalf of the 1,453 townships in Pennsylvania represented by the Association and the opportunity to testify on this safety issue that is important to our members

Townships comprise 95 percent of the Commonwealth's land area and are home to 5.5 million Pennsylvanians — 44 percent of the state's population. These townships are diverse, ranging from rural communities with fewer than 200 residents to more populated communities with more than 60,000 residents.

HB 1357 (*PN 1904*) provides for a state licensing program for plumbers within the Department of Labor and Industry. Establishing uniform standards for plumbers reassures property owners that the work being done on their biggest investment is performed by a trained and skilled plumber while recognizing the professionalism in the field.

Section 301 establishes the composition of the State Board of Plumbing Contractors. Subsection (b) states that "two public members" shall sit on the board. We recommend that consideration be given to *designating one of these seats for a municipal official* to provide a link between municipal enforcement activities and statewide activities, as well as offer a local perspective.

Although this legislation includes a procedure for keeping and maintaining a registry of individuals currently licensed by the board online, would this include a comprehensive list of contractors whose licenses have been suspended or revoked or who are under investigation? If not, we recommend that a list be compiled in conjunction with the procedures spelled out in Section 302(10), submission of an annual report detailing complaints, case statuses, and the actions taken to resolve these issues to House Professional Licensure Committee and its Senate counterpart. This information should be made available to municipalities that administer and enforce the Uniform Construction Code, as well as the general public.

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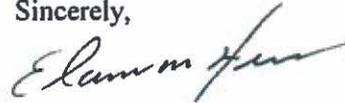
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We support the language in Section 2101(b), which would protect and retain existing municipal powers authorized under other state laws, such as inspection of plumbing, levying of taxes or fees, and issuance of business licenses not specifically related to plumbing. Because of these protected powers, we can agree to the uniformity provisions in the bill that would prohibit a municipality from requiring additional competency licenses or registration of plumbers. This section addresses PSATS' concerns and meets the objectives of the proponents of this legislation, which is to have a single, statewide license for plumbers.

The questions we raised are relatively minor and can be easily resolved. Except for these stated concerns, PSATS would like to see the general tone and balance of HB 1357 be maintained for the good of the constituents that would be protected by this legislation.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Elam M. Herr".

Elam M. Herr

Asst. Executive Director

cc: The Honorable Harry Readshaw