

Ervin Plumbing & Heating
1119 Villanova Avenue
Swarthmore, Pa. 19081

Before the
Professional Licensure Committee
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Public Hearing Regarding
House Bill # 1357
State Licensure of Plumbers

Testimony of
Joseph M. Ervin
Owner
Ervin Plumbing & Heating

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

My name is Joseph Ervin and I am the owner of Ervin Plumbing and Heating at 1119 Villanova Ave. Swarthmore, Pa. 19081. Please accept my written testimony in support of HB-1357, the state licensure of Plumbers, I have been in business for 23 years providing services to many families in Delaware, Chester and Montgomery counties. I am a third generation Plumber, after serving my apprenticeship, I tested for my master plumbers license at the local level in Lower Merion Township, Pa.

I believe very strongly that the State License would benefit all consumers. The State Attorney General "HIC" was started as a way to protect consumers from unqualified and possibly unscrupulous contractors, however there is currently no way to for the consumer or most municipalities to determine if a company is qualified to perform a specific trade. Under the current guidelines any person who sends the State \$50 can have an "HIC" license titled any way they prefer. The bad part is that most of the smaller Municipalities That can't afford to have in-house inspectors will accept this as proof of being "A Plumber" When an unqualified person works for a consumer, they could cause property damage, unsafe conditions and usually will reach out to a Professional to correct the situation, this legislation would protect consumers from someone simply calling themselves plumbers and give them the tools needed to hire qualified contractors. In the end this would be beneficial to not only the consumer, but would reduce insurance claims and that helps all of us.

Whenever election time comes around we always hear how they are going to "Create jobs". It seems to me that on a state level this bill would protect the jobs that we already have. Without a State License, most Pennsylvania Plumbers are at a serious disadvantage when it comes to bidding jobs, especially bigger residential developments and commercial jobs. Under the current rules, Surrounding states do not accept Pennsylvania local plumbing licenses. Unfortunately, Most PA. Municipalities will accept out of state plumbing licenses, therefore we are forced to compete with out of state contractors for jobs in Pennsylvania but are unable to work out of state ourselves. HB-1357 would have provisions for reciprocity that would help keep Pennsylvanian's working. Being only one of six states without a statewide plumbing license, I feel it's time to step up and protect everyone.

As a professional in the Plumbing industry, I take great pride in the slogan "The Plumber Protects the Health of the Nation". It wasn't that long ago that people in this country became seriously ill due to sub-standard plumbing practices. My industry along with the Plumbing, Heating and Cooling Contractors Association (PHCC), Has made substantial improvements to the health, safety and welfare of all Pennsylvanian's without a state license. How many industries have made improvements to themselves with so little government intervention? How many organizations would actually ask for more regulations and state involvement?

HB-1357 will generate revenue for the state, protect your constituents and level the playing field with out of state plumbers.

In closing I would like to ask you for your support in the passage of House Bill #1357 as I feel it will not only protect the consumers of Pennsylvania, protect the business interests of Pennsylvania Plumbers, it will also protect the environment and provide clean water to all.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Ervin