

March 14, 2019

Dear Honorable State Representative Cox, please let it be known that I am against House Bill 349. This Bill would open the door for contractors to pick any building inspector they would like to use. We have seen this in the past and it has not worked out very well, simply because when contractors hire a building inspection company of their choice, they can manipulate that inspection company, as far as "soft inspections". It creates the proverbial "fox watching the hen house" situation. This does not mean all contractors are bad, or do subpar work on their construction projects, but there are many contractors whom you would not want working or making choices for you, or your family, neighbors, or friends.

I've learned to really appreciate Building Inspection Underwriters as Summit Township's chosen building inspection firm. I know they are a professional and thorough company. They do an excellent job. I have no ties with BIU. What I do know is, we trust them to do a solid professional job. Whether it be BIU or another, I want to see a singular professional company working for Summit Township to protect the investor, customer, or buyer.

As a public servant, I'm all for my township choosing a reputable firm and appreciate the fact that we can choose who we want. A good quality inspection company protects businesses and residents from poorly built construction projects.

As a Township Supervisor and having been a supervisor in the construction industry for more than 25 years, I have learned one of your best assets is to surround yourself with good, honest, hard-working people and sub-contractors. That is why Summit Township decided to contract Building Inspection Underwriters to administer the Universal Construction Code. Their professional track record speaks for itself.

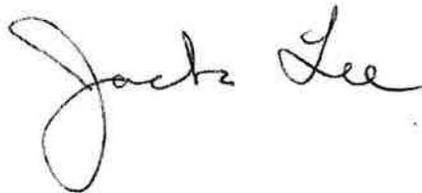
I have heard and seen many horror stories about fly by night contractors building very poorly constructed buildings with poorly done inspections or without inspections at all. The owner of the business or homeowner can have a real mess on their hands, and maybe even be forced to file for bankruptcy. If they borrow money to build or remodel their business or their home and it goes wrong, they are sunk. When a problem gets to that point, the individual can no longer afford to fix the problem or even start over, because of the debt they have accumulated by having a subpar construction project done. Inspections are in place to protect the end consumer, not to make the contractor happy by letting construction shortcuts fly.

I say a municipality who wants a quality "building inspection company", is not monopolizing the process, rather it is simply the municipality looking out for the best interest of their constituents.

Thank you for your time.

Jack Lee, Summit Township Supervisor.

Erie County, PA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Lee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.