



GCAP

General Contractors Association of Pennsylvania



June 8, 2023

Honorable Frank Burns
332 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202072
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Subject: Concerns with House Bill 390, State Licensing for Plumbers

Dear Chairman Burns:

On behalf of the General Contractors Association of Pennsylvania (GCAP), today I contact you to express our concern with House Bill 390, State Licensing for Plumbers.

Established in 1953, GCAP is a statewide, united organization of union construction employers that establish positions and recommendations from the union contractor's perspective. GCAP is an association that represents the memberships of the General Building Contractors Association (based in Philadelphia, PA); Keystone Contractors Association (based in Harrisburg, PA); Master Builders' Association of Western Pennsylvania (based in Pittsburgh, PA); and the Northeast Pennsylvania Contractors Association (based in Scranton, PA). Collectively, GCAP is the voice of over 1,000 construction companies based throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The association members of GCAP were founded with the initial sole purpose of serving as management's collective bargaining agents in labor relations. GCAP association members negotiate with such trades as: Carpenters, Laborers, Drywall Finishers, Operating Engineers, Cement Masons, Plasterers, Millwrights, and Bricklayers. Along with labor relations, GCAP association members have evolved over the years to provide additional services to union contractors, like safety, education & training, career development, community service, government relations, etc. GCAP proves that you can be pro-business and pro-union!

Concerning the issue at hand, as you may know the intent of this legislation is to establish and require state licensing for plumbers. If only the intent were covered in this legislation and uniformity among the 2,560 municipalities was achieved, this legislation would be welcomed in



our Commonwealth. However, as drafted this licensure legislation expands the jurisdictional work assignment of the plumbing contractor to work that has been traditionally performed by other contractors. We have other minor concerns with HB390 but this jurisdictional issue is a major one and we feel strongly that the state legislature should not be in the business of assigning construction work.

It is common practice that utility work outside of the building structure (i.e. water, wastewater, storm water, gas lines, etc.) is performed by site contractors such as General Contractors and Excavator Contractors. This type of underground exterior work requires different skills and equipment than that of installing building pipe systems in a structure. HB390 would require licensed plumbers to take over this utility work and, along with hurting hundreds of utility contractors and thousands from their workforce, it would also drastically increase the cost of construction.

This legislation was heavily debated for the most part of a decade until 2018 and it has sat idle since. During that decade of heated discussions with the plumbers on one side and the Laborers Union, National Utility Contractors Association and GCAP on the other side, the plumbers side made it perfectly clear that an amendment to the scope of work is not up for discussion – their self-serving interests clearly showed and their ultimate intent was uncovered.

We respectfully ask that HB390 not be considered, as well as any other pieces of legislation that attempt to legislate jurisdiction in construction.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon O'Brien', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jon O'Brien
Executive Director