



CHRIS KAPENGA

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Testimony on Assembly Bill 508
Assembly Committee on Workforce Development
October 24, 2017

Thank you Chairman Petryk and committee members for holding a hearing today on Assembly Bill 508. I also want to thank Representative Hutton for authoring the bill in the Assembly.

Wisconsin faces an impending workforce shortage in the skilled trades that will only be exacerbated as the baby boomer generation nears retirement. This issue has been well-documented, with 500,000 openings nationwide in construction trades alone. A June 2016 survey by the National Association of Homebuilders found that 68% of builders and 78% of subcontractors reported a shortage of workers, and a recent survey from the Associated General Contractors found that 70% of contractors are having difficulty finding workers.

With an expected flurry of activity around the state as the result of the proposed Foxconn investment, the need for skilled workers is more evident than ever. However, Wisconsin has a major bottleneck that prevents additional workers from entering the skilled trades: Wisconsin's apprentice-to-journeyworker ratios.

This ratio mandates that a certain number of journeyworkers be employed for each apprentice hired. While this number varies by trade, it has become an unnecessary burden to employers and potential employees alike. This problem will only grow as the workforce ages and new workers struggle to fill the gaps. Contractors already have difficulty finding the journeyworkers needed to bring on additional apprentices under current ratios.

After speaking with experts from the trades and analyzing best practices from across the country, this bill removes a major barrier to employment by setting a standardized 1:1 apprentice-to-journeyworker ratio. This will ensure that Wisconsin contractors and employers have the ability to hire additional apprentices and fill open positions, while maintaining a safety standard that is recognized by many states across the nation. In fact, a number of states have higher ratios for specific professions, such as a 3:1 ratio for electricians in Iowa. This bill will still give the state the flexibility to set a higher ratio, but starts at a baseline of 1:1.

This bill also removes the statutory apprenticeship lengths for carpentry and plumbing. Current law gives special treatment to these professions with a 4-year minimum for carpentry apprenticeships and a 5-year minimum for plumbing apprenticeships. The bill would level the playing field with other professions and give the apprenticeship advisory councils the flexibility to adjust apprenticeship lengths to match modern training standards. For example, electricians recently adjusted their minimum apprenticeship length from five years to four years.

Wisconsin has made great strides over the past six years to encourage the importance of work and lower barriers for individuals seeking gainful employment. This bill is yet another reform to help people achieve their piece of the American dream by ensuring that the government is not getting in the way of opportunities.

On a final note, after gathering feedback in the Senate hearing we will be introducing an amendment that ensures we are in compliance with federal law as it relates to apprenticeship programs.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Committee members, for your time and consideration of this bill. At this time I am happy to answer any questions from the committee.

Rob Hutton

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 13TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

October 24, 2017

To: The Assembly Committee on Workforce Development
From: Rep. Rob Hutton
Re: Assembly Bill 508

Testimony of Rep. Rob Hutton in Support of Assembly Bill 508

Thank you to the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development for hearing AB 508 today.

AB 508 seeks to address a pending shortage of workers in the construction industry. As the baby boomer generation nears retirement, they are not being replaced by the next generation of workers at the same rate. With 78% of subcontractors nationwide reporting a shortage of workers it is clear that this problem will not be going away soon. In Wisconsin this shortage is especially acute with the upcoming construction of the multi-billion dollar Foxconn facility that will need thousands of workers in the next few years.

One of the primary restrictions to individuals entering many professions are administrative rules governing the number of apprenticeships allowable for a given profession. Current law allows that ratio to be set to require multiple journeymen per apprentice. This causes a continuing shortage of workers as companies seek to find journeymen to fill the necessary slots in order to bring more apprentices on.

This legislation would set the default ratio at one journeyman to one apprentice with the option of allowing more apprentices per journeyman as the specific trade sees necessary. Doing this will allow companies to bring more apprentices on board.

This bill would also remove the statutory language regarding the length of the carpentry and plumbing apprenticeship. Instead, it allows the length of those apprenticeships to be brought in line with best practices of the occupation the same way as all other apprenticeships.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

CONSTRUCTION APPRENTICESHIP – SKILLED WORKER RATIOS

<u>Painter & Decorator</u>		<u>Insulator (Heat and Frost)</u>
1:1		1:1
2:6		2:6
3:9		3:9
4:12		4:12
<u>Carpenter</u>		<u>Sheet Metal</u>
1:1		1:1
2:4		2:3
3:7		3:5
4:10		4:7
5:13		5:9
6:16		6 + requires 2 skilled per apprentice
7:19		<u>Steamfitter</u>
8:22		1:1
9:25		2:3
10:28		3:5
11:31		4:7
12 + requires 3 skilled per apprentice		5:9
<u>Construction Craft Laborer</u>		6 + requires 2 skilled per apprentice
1:2		<u>Heavy Equipment Operator</u>
2:4		1:1
3:6		2:6
4:8		3:11
5:10		4:16
6:12		5:21
7:14		6 + requires 5 skilled per apprentice
8:16		<u>Sprinkler Fitter</u>
9:18		1:1
10 + requires 5 skilled per apprentice		<u>Bricklayer</u>
<u>Roofer / Waterproofing</u>		1:1
1:1		<u>Concrete Finisher</u>
2:3		1:1
3:5		
4:7		
5:9		
6 + requires 2 skilled per apprentice		

Why We Need the Ratio Change

May 2016 Bureau of Labor Statistics – Plumber's

1. Number of Plumbers 6,363 Wisconsin
 Master Plumbers 2,874
 Journeyman Plumbers 2,576
 Plumbing Apprentices 913
 Present Day Ratio 1:6
2. Employment per 1,000 jobs 2.304
3. Medium hourly wage \$32.65
4. "Employment of plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters is projected to grow 21 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations."
5. Their projection from 2010-2020 was for 26 percent growth in plumbing jobs, so this is actually a drop in their projection.
6. Demand for plumbers will stem from new building construction and stricter water efficiency standards for plumbing systems, such as low-flow toilets and showerheads. Replacement of our aging infrastructure.
7. The construction of new power plants and factories should spur demand for pipefitters and steamfitters. Employment of sprinkler fitters and plumbers is expected to increase in states that adopt changes to the International Residential Code (IRC), which requires new single-and-double-family homes to have fire sprinkler systems." The IRC, the source for building codes in every State in the Union, created a new requirement in 2012 for newly built (not remodeled) single-family homes to have fire sprinklers.
8. The Bureau anticipates higher than average retirements among plumbers in the next decade. Plumbers' average age is quite a bit higher than most trades.
9. The Plumbing Advisory Committee added a semester just devoted to "Green Plumbing Application". Day School Hours increased from 500 to 572.
10. Green Plumbers – Certification
11. 4 year or 5 year? Why are apprentices completing their education in 4 years yet sitting for a year before writing their test?
12. Close the skills gap. When the industry knowledge is sitting with guys that are aged at 50 years old or older we better get the knowledge into the apprentices ASAP.

This ratio change is not about labor it's about "Skilled Labor"
"Knowledge + Experience = WISDOM"

Patrick O'Neill
WCTC Plumbing Instructor
Master Plumber #225344
Plumbing Designer D-2215-P



**2017 Assembly Bill 508
October 24, 2017**

**Jeffrey J. Beiriger
Executive Director**

Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors – Wisconsin Association

Good morning. My name is Jeff Beiriger and I am the Executive Director of the Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors – Wisconsin Association and the Master Plumbers Association of Wisconsin. I am testifying for information only.

Without question, there is a worker shortage affecting every industry, not just construction and certainly not just plumbing. Adjusting apprenticeship ratios to 1:1 will likely help some contractors. It may also help some employees get started in the trades. It probably won't hurt the industry as a whole. But to be clear, it's unlikely that it will address the underlying issues regarding trades employment.

There's a demographic issue that is well documented, but it's more than that. Even with a 1:1 ratio, we're not likely to see 6,000 apprentices in the plumbing industry. Right now, a company can employ as many as 6 apprentices if they employ 10 journey-level workers. If any of those apprentices are in their fourth or fifth year of training, they do not count in the ratio, so a company can hire an additional first, second, or third-year apprentice for each fourth or fifth-year apprentice that they employ. What that means is that it's possible to have something quite close to a 1:1 ratio today.

There are, however, few employers who are training at the maximum allowable ratio. Training apprentices happens not in isolation – the industry is well aware of our

workforce needs – but in the context of the business. For an employer, committing to training an apprentice is a business decision that involves a commitment to the apprentice. The business decision involves additional overhead when the apprentice is in paid-related instruction. The business decision involves the nature of the work done by the contractor, with service being the prime example of a type of work where it can be difficult to train an apprentice. Some businesses – especially in smaller communities – may need one person to do more than just plumbing as they might also provide HVAC, pump installation, and other services. The business decision can also include the ability and willingness of the existing workforce to embrace a new worker and provide that person with quality training on the job.

The industry has a long history with apprenticeship and we've weathered the ups and downs and will again this time. Yes, we have an aging workforce. Yes, we have fewer new entrants into the workplace. Yes, we've experienced a sluggish economy for much of this decade. And yes, we haven't done much to encourage people to enter the trades.

The pendulum does seem to be swinging back in our direction, but years of dismantling technical education programs have hurt us. Years of encouraging everyone to go to college have hurt us. We need tech education to return to the schools. We need new measurements for what constitutes a successful outcome following high school. Entry into a skilled trades apprenticeship is a very good outcome indeed....

The trades aren't a place for those who can't go to college. They are a place for those who choose not to go to college, even if they could. They are a place where people

can use their heads and their hands. They are for people who are smart but who prosper where they can see and then do and not simply learn from a lecture or a book.

Maybe we shouldn't just wait for the pendulum to swing our way. Maybe it's time to give it a shove in our direction. If any portion of our worker shortage can be blamed on the negative talk about the trades, lets address that even as we consider this bill. Let's talk about the trades as an alternative to college. One where you earn as you learn. One where you don't have any student loans. One where you can learn a skill that will always be needed in our state. One where your skills can help build a Habitat home or rebuild a community after a tornado has come through. One where employers and employees contribute to training and ask for little or nothing in the way of government support. One where there are opportunities for those who want to learn more. One where business ownership is a real possibility. It's there that we believe we need to focus our collective attention as we look to rebuild our ranks.

Assembly Bill 508 also addresses the length of apprenticeship programs. Our initial reaction, frankly, was negative and we still have some reservations. Our fear is that this legislation would dictate that the length of the apprenticeship for our trade. Nobody thinks it takes a single year to train an apprentice plumber. Creating uniformity in the statutes is not our concern. Our concern is the outcome of our apprenticeship program.

It's our understanding that this bill would not compel any trade to have a one-year apprenticeship program necessarily, but would instead vest that decision with the Department of Workforce Development who would work through state apprenticeship

trade committees to continue to provide guidance on the classroom and on-the-job aspects of apprenticeship programs.

Input from the industry is a good and necessary thing in our eyes. We want these committees to continue to serve in this role, so much so that we would prefer to see that called out in this legislation. Our goal is to ensure that its future workforce continues to be the product of high standards and a challenging curriculum. For our business owners, the end-game of our apprenticeship training program is a well-trained plumber. That plumber, more than faucets and fixtures, is our product. That plumber's skills are what contractors across the state are offering to customers in their communities.

I should add that the Senate, in its work, made a few amendments to its version of this bill (SB 411). We support those changes.

What we know is that finding and retaining a future workforce is probably one of the top two or three issues facing our industry and every industry. Assembly Bill 508 probably doesn't hurt the industry any and maybe it even helps a little. What would help even more is to change the message about who we are and what we do. Let's praise those who choose the trades as much as those who choose college. Let's respect a journeyworker the same way we do a college graduate. And let's support high standards in training that serve our apprentices and business owners for many years to come.

For more information:

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October 24, 2017

Dear members of the Committee on Workforce Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Collin Roth and I am a Research Fellow with the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, a not-for-profit law and policy organization in Milwaukee. Today I will be testifying on Assembly Bill 508.

As the country moves toward expanding apprenticeship opportunities, it is fitting that Wisconsin – the first state in the nation to pass legislation creating a registered apprenticeship system – be at the forefront. Wisconsin’s economic activity – bolstered by Foxconn – places a renewed emphasis on the need for skilled workers. This new bill could allow businesses to hire more apprentices by reducing legal burdens on them.

In this testimony I will talk about how changing the apprentice-to-journeyworker ratio does three things: 1) helps employers fill their demand for skilled workers; 2) keeps costs down for consumers and employers, and increases job opportunities; and 3) better aligns Wisconsin with national trends.

1. Assembly Bill 508 helps ensure employers have enough skilled workers to fill their employment needs

Often an alternative path to two- or four-year colleges, apprenticeships are a win-win for both employers and job-seekers. Companies are able to train people to fill their precise skill needs, and job-seekers get a hands-on education, improved employment opportunities, and greater earning potential.¹

Unfortunately existing Wisconsin law makes it difficult for some employers to hire additional apprentices. Using a system of, sometimes complex, ratios, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) determines how many apprentices a business can hire. These ratio rules limit the hiring of apprentices relative to the number of journeyworkers employed.

The ratios vary by industry and often change with the hire of apprentices. For example, in Wisconsin in carpentry, the ratio starts at one apprentice per one journeyworker. But if a company wishes to hire an additional apprentice, they must employ three journeyworkers per apprentice.

Research by the C. D. Howe Institute in Canada and the Yankee Institute in Connecticut suggest that requiring a high number of journeyworkers to apprentices can result in too few apprentices being

¹ Debbie Reed et al. “An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeships in 10 States.” *Mathematica*. July 2012.

trained to fill the employment needs of businesses.² They also found that high ratios are likely to harm smaller businesses with fewer journeyworkers and reduce their incentive to expand.

Take for example Paul Breglia, owner of Crest Mechanical Services in Connecticut. According to Breglia, "There's a dearth of journeymen. The older guys are retiring and we need apprentices to train the next generation." Data from the Consumer Protection Department verifies that the number of journeymen in Connecticut is declining. Breglia says Connecticut's ratio rule restricts him from taking on more apprentices, though. "I would have to hire three more guys to take on one more apprentice."³

Of course, changing the apprentice ratio does not mandate that businesses hire more apprentices. It simply gives them the flexibility to do so.

2. Lower ratios keep costs down for consumers and employers and increase job opportunities

The Howe study also concludes that: "journeyperson-apprentice ratios above one [to one] result in 38 percent fewer young workers – those between the ages of 25 and 34 – in a trade." This suggests that higher ratios "reduce total employment in a trade by dissuading workers most likely to start a new career from entering a trade or by diminishing the ability of firms to hire younger workers."

The C.D. Howe Institute and Yankee Institute also found that higher ratios drive up the cost to do business by limiting the labor pool, which can lead to an increase in workers' wages. This in turn drives up the costs to the consumers.

Under the bill, DWD would not be able to "prescribe, enforce, or authorize" apprenticeship ratios that require more than one journeyworker to one apprentice. This bill, which would level the ratios across industries, would allow employers to expand their apprenticeship programs and take on more apprentices.

Some may argue that the bill will lower safety standards and quality of work. Safety and quality should certainly be maintained in order to protect employees, employers, and consumers. The question is if this bill would promote unsafe and sloppy practices. Though the bill would lower the ratio of journeyworkers to apprentices, it wouldn't give free rein to apprentice programs. Programs would not be able to suddenly have one journeyworker to ten apprentices. Oversight from DWD would still be required to make sure safety standards are being followed. A study of ratios in Canada found no evidence of an increase in workplace injuries or fatalities that correlated to lower ratios.⁴

Researchers at C.D. Howe make the recommendation that rather than limiting entry into apprenticeship programs, regulations should instead focus on quality of work done. Maintaining high quality and safety standards should be a priority, but do not need to be accomplished by limiting job opportunities.

3. Expanding apprenticeship opportunities aligns Wisconsin with national trends

Other states have led the way toward lowering the apprentice to journeyworker ratios. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the occupation with the highest number of apprentices in 2016 was

² Robbie Brydon and Benjamin Dachis. "Access Denied: The Effect of Apprenticeship Restrictions in Skilled Trades". *C.D. Howe Institute*. May 2013. Marc E. Fitch. "Does Connecticut's apprenticeship ratio limit jobs for young people?" *The Yankee Institute*. August 2017.

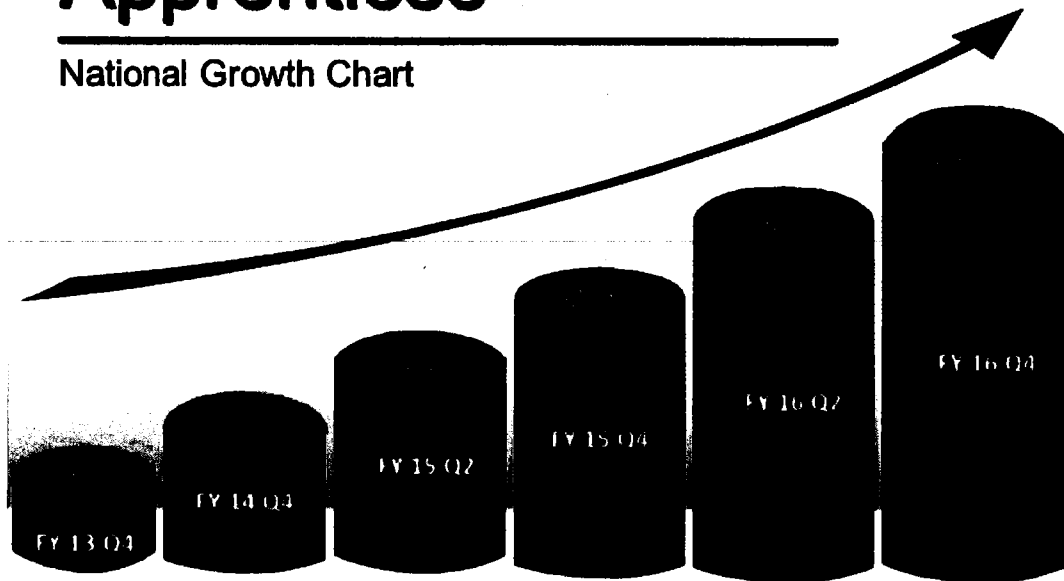
³ Marc E. Fitch. 2017.

⁴ William Lorimer. "Impact of Ratios in Ontario's Electrician Trade." *Canadian Centre for Policy Studies*.

electrician, so I will use that as my comparison point. In 2016, the Michigan legislature changed the state's ratio rule for the electrical industry to one journeyworker to up to three apprentices. Other states with this ratio for their electrical industry include Iowa, Utah, North Dakota, Colorado, and Nebraska. Wisconsin, by comparison, is much more restrictive; the electrical ratio for journeyworkers to apprentices is one journeyworker to the first apprentice, then three to four journeyworkers to the second apprentice, etc.

Apprentices

National Growth Chart



Source: United States Department of Labor

A shift toward expanding apprenticeship opportunities isn't just happening at the state level. The Obama Administration awarded millions in grants to increase apprenticeship opportunities. And this June President Trump signed an executive order reducing the federal government's role in creating and regulating apprenticeship programs. The goal of this order is to give businesses and agencies more freedom to design apprenticeship programs, hopefully increasing the number of apprenticeship slots and helping industries fill their massive need for employees. Just the construction industry and members of Associated Builders and Contractors alone need half a million workers to fill existing jobs.

"Today's apprentices will construct the roads and bridges that move our citizens, they will bend the metal and steel that shape our cities, and they will pioneer the new technology that drives our commerce," said President Trump in a June speech.

Unfortunately, in Wisconsin the current apprenticeship ratio laws deter people from entering certain professions. With this bill, the legislature can fix that.

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Scott Walker, Governor
Ray Allen, Secretary

Assembly Committee on Workforce Development

Testimony on Assembly Bill 508

Andrew Evenson, Legislative Liaison, Department of Workforce Development

Chairperson Petryk and members of the Assembly Committee:

I am Andrew Evenson, the Legislative Liaison for the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). On behalf of DWD, I would like to thank you for allowing me to testify for information only.

For over 100 years, the Wisconsin Registered Apprenticeship Program has provided training to rigorous industry standards in a variety of occupations. While registered apprenticeship remains a unique on the job training option that benefits apprentices and employers alike, its future growth and continued success required that it adapt and reflect changes in the Wisconsin workplace and the American workplace. Wisconsin has done this by creating pathways in several new, in-demand industries over the past two years.

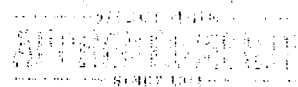
Federal regulations CFR 29 Part 29 sets forth the framework for the registered apprenticeship program. The framework requires each apprenticeship program to address the requirement of a numeric ratio of skilled workers to apprentices. Currently, that ratio varies by industry and is set by the Apprenticeship Council.

Assembly Bill 508 prohibits DWD from prescribing, enforcing, or authorizing a ratio of apprentices to journeyworkers more than one journeyworker for each apprentice to increase the number of sponsors and apprentices in Registered Apprenticeship.

Currently state statute establishes minimum terms for carpentry (4 years which may be extended an additional year) and plumbing (5 years which may be extended an additional year) apprenticeships. AB 508 repeals the minimum terms and allows the Apprenticeship Council to determine minimum terms as they already do for other trades.

I would be happy to answer any technical questions you may have. Thank you again for your time and for the opportunity to testify today.

Apprentice to Journeyworker Ratios and Revisions by State Trade Advisory Committee



State Committee	APR:JW Ratio as of Jan 1, 2017	Revisions
Arborist	1:1	Revised 2017 Implemented 2016.
Auto Fire Sprinkler Fitter	1:1	No change since 2010.
Barber & Cosmetologist	1:1	No change since 2010.
Carpentry	First APR may be employed when 1-3 JWs are employed. Thereafter, 1:3.	No change since 2010.
Construction Craft Laborer	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:2 up to and including 9 APRs. Thereafter, 1:5.	Revised July 2017. Revised June 2016. Revised July 2014.
Electric Utility	1:1	No change since 2010.
Electrical & Instrumentation	1:1	No change since 2010.
Electrical Construction	Initially, 1:1. May employ 2nd APR with 3 or 4 JWs; two more JWs than APRs between five and twelve JWs; and thereafter, one APR for two JWs.	No change since 2010.
Glazier	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:3.	No change since 2010.
Industrial Mech. & Fluid Maint	1:1	No change since 2010.
Heat & Frost	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:3.	No change since 2010.
Ironworking	1:4	No change since 2010.
Machine Tool	1:1	No change since 2010.
Masonry	1:1	No change since 2002
Painting & Decorating	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:3.	No change since 2010.
Plumbing	Initially, 1:1. Two APRs, 3 JWs. Three APRs, 4 JWs. Four APRs, 5-6 JWs. Five APRs, 7-9 JWs. Six APRs, 10 JWs. Thereafter, 1:2.	No change since 2010.
Roofer & Waterproofer	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:2.	No change since 2002
Sheet Metal	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:2.	No change since 2010.
Steamfitting	Initially, 1:1. Thereafter, 1:2.	No change since 2010.
Wastewater Treatment	1:1	Began 2012. No change



TO: Representative Warren Petryk, Chair
Members, Assembly Committee on Workforce Development

FR: Jeff Gaecke, Executive Director
Mechanical Contractors Association of Wisconsin

Lauri Rollings, Executive Director
Plumbing Mechanical Sheet Contractors' Alliance

Terry Hayden, President
Wisconsin Pipe Trades Association

DA: October 24, 2017

RE: AB 508, relating to Apprentice-to-journeyworker ratios in apprenticeships

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments on AB 508, which modifies the apprenticeship ratio for skilled trades. The members of our two organizations simply do not think this legislation is needed, with our primary concern being that it would compromise workplace safety in the construction trades that we represent.

Safety on the job site is a top priority. We invest millions of dollars annually in training to ensure our workers are educated on workplace risks while being well-equipped to handle them. In addition to providing apprentices with close instruction from journeymen, we also administer drug testing and workplace safety training to make certain our workers are consistently meeting our professional standards.

Maintaining safety on a construction site goes beyond exercising common sense in a complex work environment; it should involve experienced journeymen teaching apprentices the intricacies of safety under the auspices of each profession. Apprentices in a trade don't become "skilled workers" overnight or on accident. Apprenticeship programs are successful because their workers are trained by the skilled, professional journeymen already on the job. This on-the-job training is an imperative part of the apprenticeship and results in the thorough education of a skilled worker. Maintaining reasonable apprentice to journeyman ratios on the jobsite is a vital component of this education.

Currently, ratios are set by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and based on the input of Apprenticeship Advisory Committees for each craft. The committees are comprised of members from both employee and employer groups, so the concerns of both labor and management are well-balanced and taken equally into consideration. Each trade is different – a one-size-fits-all limit ignores the demands of each profession and the knowledge and training required to become a skilled tradesman in a given craft. This recognition has resulted in the current structure for recommending ratios within DWD. Adequate ratios ensure that employers and customers receive a high-quality product while preventing workmanship from suffering due to a lack of experience or knowledge. The absence of adequate, customized ratios will cause overall value and efficiency of contractors to suffer and could compromise safety.

The current system allows professions to modify their rules appropriately to respond to fluctuations in the economy. This flexibility enables trades to strike a balance between the need for new craftsmen and the importance of ensuring safe workplaces while providing consistent, thorough training for new apprentices. In addition, the system allows individual employers flexibility in situations where they are having difficulty complying with ratio requirements for their profession.

This bill will have negative short-term and long-term impacts. It is intended to remedy the “skills gap” by trying to encourage more workers to pursue a skilled trade. However, by ignoring agreed upon ratios it does the exact opposite. This bill will dilute the training of workers within these trades and undermine the definition of what a “skilled trade” is. There would be an increased likelihood of project delays or cost increases due to rework and repair if apprentices lack adequate instruction and supervision. In addition, a failure or deficiency in an apprentice’s on-the-job training jeopardizes the individual’s progress by limiting knowledge and skill gained over the course of the apprenticeship. This leads to a **less skilled** workforce and an increased likelihood of workplace injuries to the apprentices and other workers on the construction site.

The goal of apprenticeship is to create a safe, productive, and highly skilled workforce. To the benefit of the industry – both employers and employees – strong apprenticeship results in long-term careers in construction, not just short-term jobs. A lack of supervision and training undermines apprenticeship programs and becomes the real barrier to having a highly skilled, efficient, and productive workforce. We’d be happy to discuss other ways to encourage the growth of construction trades, but this bill takes the wrong approach when it comes to developing our workforce.

We respectfully request that you oppose this legislation.