



**Joint Testimony
Senate Regulatory Reform Committee
May 25th, 2016**

Good afternoon Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak today on behalf of the members of and with approval from the boards of directors of the Michigan Energy Efficiency Contractors Association (MEECA) and the Michigan Air Conditioning Contractors Associations (MIACCA). My name is Brindley Byrd. I am executive director of both these associations.

MEECA works to expand Michigan's energy efficiency industry.

MIACCA works for fair competition throughout Michigan's mechanical industry.

Both seek all-industry, unbiased solutions to improve the regulatory environment in which our members operate.

First, we would like to acknowledge the effort put forth by the Dept. of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and Senator Ken Horn for bringing this package of bills before this esteemed body.

We see the need and agree with the concept of streamlining the obtaining of and renewal of skilled trade licenses. A single doorway into licensing in these skilled-trades would save the State significant administrative expense and provide opportunity for better service to license candidate or those seeking to renew a license that falls under the Skilled Trades Regulation Act.

Due to a very limited time to review the bills and that each respective board has not vetted the entire bill package, we must submit a position of 'neutral' on the proposed package at this time.

We do request this Committee give time for our organizations and the many other stakeholders who are similarly situated trying to figure out what these bills say, the intended and the unintended consequences and position my boards to make an informed decision on the bills.

The associations I represent have members in all the trades impacted by Senate Bill 963. We are rather active in the regulatory arena of these trades and currently have bills over in the House looking at other ways to fast-track new mechanical licenses and minimize expense to customers who purchase replacement residential water heaters or mechanical systems requiring low-voltage control wiring (House Bills 5435-5437).

We pledge to the bill sponsor and Committee to work together seeking all-industry solutions to the final drafts of these bills as they move through this committee process.



Some of our initial concerns include:

- 1) Limitations being put on license holders. The language as provided in SB963 on page 9, section (3) would allow a limitation to be placed on a license holder without any guidance by the boards with prevue of the particular license type. When would the Department impose a limitation? Also, would the Department inform the board with prevue each time a sanction was imposed or in bulk?
- 2) There are no provisions preventing frivolous complaints being filed against a person or license holder. The skilled trades is an extremely competitive environment. In no way are we suggesting to prevent due process. We are expressing concern that a particular license holder could be unfairly targeted with frivolous complaints that would also bog down the regulatory process.
- 3) We do have concern and are working through the variance of the role of the Mechanical Board of Appeals as currently administered according to the Forbes Mechanical Act as compared to the role of board contained in Article 3 of SB963.
- 4) We share concern with other stakeholder groups about the way in which fees can be set and increased as stated in Article 4. We understand the cost of business and that the State needs to cover all costs associated with exam development, processing and tracking. We are opposed to fee increases, just not yet comfortable with how Article 4 articulates this aspect of skilled trades licensing.
- 5) We do agree with the need to penalize individuals working without proper licensing or permits. As competitive as the skilled trades are, all the licensed and professional contractors in the state are competing with others operating unfairly, without licensing, permits, proven competency and who endanger the health and safety of occupants of buildings built or service by such black market contractors.

I would again like to reiterate that MEECA and MIACCA agree with the overall concept of this sweeping package of bills, requesting proper time to vet and them before moving to a position of support.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our intital concerns with the Committee and would be happy to take any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brindley Byrd", written over a white background.

Brindley Byrd
Executive Director