

NFSA

NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION

The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

May 24, 2021

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Senator Diane Savino
Room 315
Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247

email: savino@nysenate.gov

RE: OPPOSITION to S.6761 Savino (An act to amend the general business law, in relation to fire suppression systems and licensing professionals to perform authorized work on fire suppression systems)

Dear Senator Savino;

#1 On behalf of the Empire Chapter of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, representing long-standing fire sprinkler contractors in the State of New York, we write in OPPOSITION to the above referenced legislation.

#2 This legislation requires individuals who perform work on fire sprinkler systems be licensed by the State of New York. Simply put, we would be in favor of this if it were licensing the company, but NOT the individual. If enacted, it will make it more difficult for companies to do business in New York State. This legislation is an unwarranted burden on companies that provide fire protection solutions as part of a total life safety system.

#3 As it stands, the state and local governments already struggle with enforcement of adopted National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and International Code Council (ICC) codes and standards. Supporting state and local authorities enforcing them should be a much higher priority than licensing individual fitters who install fire suppression systems.

Companies, like our members, already provide training to those individuals installing fire suppression systems that comply with nationally recognized installation codes and standards and additional training is also available from national organizations recognized as fire sprinkler industry experts.

Enactment of this legislation would also create unnecessary and unwarranted barriers to

#4

entry for many potential employees. This is the exact opposite of what the state should be doing, particularly as we begin the post-pandemic economic recovery. It creates unnecessary obstacles to employment into a well-paying trade. Our members already provide all necessary training that prepares fitters to successfully participate in the installation and maintenance of fire suppression systems.

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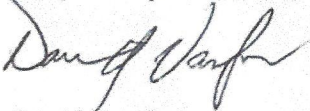
Fire suppression systems are permitted and inspected by various local and state agencies and there are presently several levels of approvals and inspections required to ensure systems are installed properly to function as designed in the event of a fire.

#6

In closing, this bill will make hiring good employees by New York State fire sprinkler contractors more difficult while imposing additional unnecessary administrative burdens on the State of New York. As members of the Empire Chapter of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, we instead SUPPORT a different approach by licensing the companies that provide fire suppression systems. Current legislation (S.4008/A.3272) is supported by the fire sprinkler industry and is consistent with existing licensing requirements for other industries including electronic life safety.

The Empire Chapter of the National Fire Sprinkler Association therefore OPPOSES the enactment of this legislation as an unnecessary burden on businesses in New York State.

Respectfully submitted,



David Vandeyar
Chair

Empire Chapter of the National Fire Sprinkler Association

#1 – The Empire Chapter is inconsistent with other state Chapters that supports Sprinkler Fitter licensing, such as Michigan and California. Meanwhile Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, Ohio and West Virginia all have Licensing requirements.

#2 – As stated in the 2nd paragraph the individual must obtain a license therefore the burden is not on the company. It would however make it more difficult to do business in New York State when companies try to utilize unqualified, untrained and in some cases undocumented workers to perform this highly skilled work.

#3 – As stated in the 3rd. paragraph, “local governments struggle with enforcement of NFPA codes”. This Bill will give code enforcement agencies another tool to ensure these life safety systems are installed by trained and qualified individuals. Local government code enforcement officials support licensing.

#4 – This is a false and misleading statement as there are zero barriers for entry into any training programs, training a qualified and ready work force is exactly what got this industry through the pandemic.

#5 – This is a contradiction to the claims in paragraph 3.

#6 – The Bill would not impede the entry or hiring of “good employees” the contractor only approach leaves the worker behind and would not stop the unqualified, untrained and in some cases undocumented workers from performing this highly skilled work. In the New England market New York is one of the last States to have any sprinkler fitter licensing requirements.

In closing, New Yorkers deserve to know that a qualified, trained essential work force is performing this highly skilled work on these critical life safety systems.