

ALASKA AFL-CIO

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Executive President



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March 10, 2020

Chair Spohnholz and members
House Labor and Commerce Committee
State Capital Building
Juneau, Alaska

Subject: Support for HB 301

Dear Chair Spohnholz:

The Alaska AFL CIO Supports statutory changes that strengthen life and safety protections for workers and consumers. We believe regulatory changes are too easy to change by every Administration, such as the recent changes proposed to the regulations related to the Department of Labor's requirements as it relates to certificates of fitness and apprenticeship requirements. We had hoped the public comments would be given more attention in the regulation process but many time they are not.

The Alaska AFL-CIO believes strongly that Apprenticeship Training Programs saves lives of the workers but it also improves life and safety for users. We in the trades believe that good training programs are so important that we invest millions of dollars annually of our own money to fund them.

The Alaska AFL-CIO understands the high cost of doing inspections, having oversight , and providing training, but until every contractor, home builder and worker does what's right just because its the right thing to do, inspection and oversight are needed.

I have personally fallen victim to some of the cutting corners to save time and money to the tune of thousands of dollar of repairs to my house. Sewer vent pipes that where just cut off in the wall that rotted walls, floors and joists. Live (hot) electric wires just left in the walls; wires that were just twisted and taped that started smoldering in the wall. Thank God for a smoke detector waking us up for that one.

Chair Spohnholz and members of the Labor & Commerce Committee, HB 301 does not increase or decrease any code changes or inspection requirement. It just sets the current standard of training required to receive a certificate of fitness in statute. This training is important to protect the life. safety, and health of everyone that is why we support HB 301 and ask for your vote of support.

Sincerely,

Don Etheridge
Alaska AFL-CIO