



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 170 ENERGY PROJECTS – REQUIRED LABOR STANDARDS February 9, 2023

TO: Hon. Melony Griffith, Chair and members of the Senate Finance Committee
From: Tom Clark, Political Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 26

Madam Chair and members of the Senate Finance Committee, please join me in **support of SB 170**, Energy Generation Projects-Required Labor Standards. A bill that addresses the issues of the hard-working Marylander before they are victims of wage theft or misclassification. A bill that addresses the unscrupulous contractor before they commit bad labor practices against our citizens and before they steal Maryland tax dollars from the state's coffers.

I salute the sponsors of this bill for attaching these labor standards in the draft of the bill, as opposed to waiting for the Pro Maryland worker lobby to add amendments. Adding amendments usually delays the passage of any bill, sometimes for years. Quite often the Maryland citizens that are harmed most by wage theft and mis-classification are those of the Hispanic community that are language challenged or afraid of the repercussions for speaking up.

I would like to note that 90% of the electrical utility companies that do state work, follow the rules and practice good faith business with it's employees and the state. However, it is the 10% of unscrupulous contractors that mis-classify workers and under pay employees that make it tough for the honest contractors to compete. I will use the example of Power Design a Florida based company that comes to the Freestate with Mis-classification and wage theft as a Business Model. They have been successfully sued by the District of Columbia for wage-theft, but they make so much money from stealing from construction workers that they stay in the area because cheating is profitable, even after being sued. SB 170 addresses such horrific business practices. This bill may use disbarment for habitual stealers. This forward thinking piece of legislation can put an end to horrible contractors like Power Design, but most importantly it will protect the paychecks of the men and women that do electrical utility work in our proud state.

Please join me in **supporting SB 170**, a bill that will fight wage theft and the mis-classification of Maryland workers. Thank you

