



Testimony in Support of House Bill 4719

## **An Act to Create HVAC Construction Supervisor Licensing for Small Businesses**

### **Chairman Chan, Chairman Payano, and Members of the Committee:**

My name is **Catherine Flaherty**, and I am the **Executive Director of the Air Conditioning Association of New England (ACA/NE)**. On behalf of our members, I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of **House Bill 4719**, An Act to Create HVAC Construction Supervisor Licensing for Small Businesses.

ACA/NE represents residential and small commercial heating, ventilation, and air conditioning contractors throughout New England, with a significant portion of our membership located in Massachusetts. Our members are the professionals designing, installing, and servicing the HVAC systems that Massachusetts families and small businesses rely on every day.

House Bill 4719 is a straightforward bill with a **significant positive impact on consumers, public safety, and energy efficiency** across the Commonwealth.

### Why This Legislation Is Needed

For several years, ACA/NE has advocated for the creation of an HVAC-specific Construction Supervisor License (CSL) through the Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS). Despite multiple presentations and ongoing discussions, progress stalled, creating increasing frustration among **building inspectors, contractors, and local officials** who recognize the need for clearer oversight of residential HVAC work.

Unlike other specialized construction trades—such as roofing, masonry, insulation, and window and siding installation—HVAC does not currently have a dedicated CSL, despite the fact that HVAC systems **require permits, inspections, and strict adherence to building codes**.

House Bill 4719 addresses this gap.

### What House Bill 4719 Does

If enacted, this legislation would:

- Establish a **CSL–HVAC specialty license**, modeled after existing CSL licenses for other construction trades

- Place the license under the **jurisdiction of the BBRS**, subject to all existing building codes, regulations, and enforcement
- Expand HVAC industry representation by adding **two HVAC professionals** to the BBRS Continuing Education Advisory Council
- Create a clear, consistent path for contractors already performing residential and small commercial HVAC work to obtain appropriate licensure
- Establish a career path for students in technical and vocational schools, thereby contributing to the workforce development.

Importantly, this bill **does not create new permitting or inspection requirements**, nor does it add any cost to the Commonwealth. All regulatory infrastructure is already in place.

#### Consumer Protection, Safety, and Energy Efficiency

This legislation is fundamentally about protecting consumers by supporting a well-trained workforce and ensuring energy systems perform as intended. However, when systems do not perform as intended, the impacts can include:

- Higher utility bills for homeowners
- Reduced system lifespan
- Increased strain on the electrical grid
- Costs that are ultimately borne by all ratepayers

As Massachusetts pursues ambitious decarbonization goals, ensuring that HVAC systems are **properly designed, sized, and installed** is one of the most effective and affordable ways to reduce energy consumption and emissions. A high-efficiency system installed incorrectly performs worse than a lower-efficiency system installed properly.

#### Workforce Training and Public Safety

Modern HVAC systems increasingly rely on **new refrigerants**, including flammable, mildly flammable, and high-pressure refrigerants. House Bill 4719 helps ensure that individuals supervising HVAC work are **properly trained and accountable**, protecting consumers, technicians, and structures alike.

#### Conclusion

House Bill 4719 is a **win for consumers, a win for public safety, and a win for the Commonwealth's climate and energy goals**. It recognizes HVAC as the specialized trade it is, ensures qualified supervision of work, and creates consistent statewide standards—without adding costs or burdening other trades.

ACA/NE respectfully urges the Committee to report **House Bill 4719 favorably**.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

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