

## **Changes to the contractor certification law supported by the Contractor Certification Subcommittee**

During the February Advocacy Group Meeting a Contractor Certification Subcommittee was formed to review all state statutes and administrative rules regarding contractor certification in Wisconsin. These laws and administrative rules have largely been unchanged since they were initially passed as 2005 Wisconsin Act 200.

Cory Sillars (Wausau) chaired the Contractor Certification Subcommittee with the following members volunteering to serve as members: Mark Brehmer (MABA), Andy Selner (Brown County), Dan Schneider (Mid Shores/Manitowoc County), Jim Reif (Manitowoc County), Alecia Plaetz (Chippewa Valley), Alex Forer (Wausau), and Brandon Bartow (Manitowoc County).

The subcommittee reviewed all relevant state statutes and administrative rules prior to their first meeting. The subcommittee meet a total of 2 times over the spring of 2020 via Zoom and coalesced around the following suggested changes to improve contractor certification in Wisconsin.

- a) Support a requirement that the initial 12 hours be in person only and participants be required to show photo identification at registration
- b) Add an addition to the list of classes that are offered as part of the initial 12 hours to include accounting and lien law
- c) Add a requirement that at least 4 hours of the continuing education credits must cover “construction laws and codes” and “contracts, liability, and risk management.”
- d) Anyone holding a DCC must also hold a DCQ as well
- e) Make sure that DSPS is enforcing current requirements like requiring a test for credits provided online
  - i. Current code language says DSPS “may” require submission of questions for review. Support changing that language to “shall”
  - ii. Request a change that would require the vender providing the online class to submit acknowledgement of the completed and corrected test for each credit received online for the DCQ

All the suggested changes would be drafted as one bill to updated section 101.654 of Wisconsin State Statutes.

A message from subcommittee Chair Sillars on the subcommittee believes these changes are necessary:

*Building Contractors are professionals in a trade, no different than plumbers, electricians, or HVAC installers. Our members take the time to educated themselves constantly. Many have field experience and are skilled carpenters besides. All of this has value. We de-value ourselves if that is not recognized.*

*Ethan Lauer, a staff attorney with the Wisconsin Legislative Council, did a review of the credentialing requirements for Electricians, Plumbers and Contractors for the Subcommittee per the request of Brad Boycks and me. After reviewing that document, it is very apparent that contractors have the fewest requirements to gain a credential. Arguments can be and have been made about the good or bad of this situation in the past and will surely be discussed again now.*

*It is the subcommittee's belief that at an absolute minimum, the current regulations should be enforced as written and the subcommittee believes that is currently not taking place. We are offering up changes to improve the enforcement of current language, improve the type of minimum educational course offerings, ensure the initial courses are completed by the individual applying for the credential, and improve the professional standards for both the DCC and DCQ credential holders as a whole.*

*I believe that these changes need to be made and should be fully supported by the WBA Advocacy Committee and the WBA Board of Directors as a part of our next 2021-2022 Advocacy Agenda.*