

Coalition Against the Service Worker Prevailing Wage Expansion [A.10257-D/S .8379-A]



Empire State Chapter



City of New York



June 2010

RE: Opposition to A.10257-D/S .8379-A (service worker prevailing wage expansion)

Dear Senator/Assemblymember:

We, the undersigned businesses, large and small, and business organizations who represent all areas of the State, together with representatives from municipal governments, **strongly oppose A.10257-D/S.8379-A.**

This legislation would significantly increase the type and amount of work that is traditionally subject to prevailing wage laws by expanding the list of job categories covered by the prevailing wage laws, and by expanding the coverage of the prevailing wage law for the first time to private businesses.

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This bill represents a huge job-killing mandate that New York cannot afford. While it appears to impact only utilities, it goes far beyond this and sets a dangerous precedent for all businesses throughout the State.

The State and its local governments are facing some of their greatest fiscal challenges ever. Therefore, it is imperative that the State Legislature do everything in its power to help local governments better manage their fiscal affairs. Instead, this legislation would impose costly new mandates on the State of New York, local governments and all New Yorkers.

Businesses, especially small businesses, are also concerned about the expansion of prevailing wage mandates and increased utility costs, which increase the already high costs of doing business in the State.

The expansion of the prevailing wage law to private sector companies would establish a dangerous precedent that could be applied to virtually any private entity in the future – including manufacturers, food processors, hospitals, universities, insurers and others.

By classifying gas and electric companies as “public agencies,” this bill will require utilities to pay the prevailing wage rate to a host of service workers who perform work under contract. These are not utility workers, but instead contractors for whom utilities contract for services. These additional costs have nothing to do with improving customer service, reliability, or safety, but will be passed along to energy users in the form of higher rates. Thus, the bill will result in increased costs to energy consumers at a time when the economy is already in trouble.

New Yorkers need to see the costs of living and working in this state reduced, not increased. The State Legislature simply cannot continue to burden taxpayers, the State and local governments and private businesses with more job-killing mandates. This legislation will KILL jobs, cost all New Yorkers and will further erode New York's economy.

For these reasons, we urge each Member of the State Legislature to show their commitment to turning the State's economy around by saying “no” to new job-killing mandates and hidden taxes, including the service worker prevailing wage mandate.

Yours,

National Federation of Independent Businesses
Chamber Alliance of New York State
NYS Association of Counties (NYSAC)

Business Council of New York State
MACNY - Manufacturers Association of NYS
NYS Conference of Mayors (NYCOM)

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(coalition members, continued)

Buffalo Niagara Partnership
The Westchester County Association
Otsego County Chamber of Commerce
Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp.
Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce
Rochester Gas & Electric
Chamber of Schenectady County
Orange & Rockland Utilities
The City of New York
NYS Economic Development Council
Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce

Unshackle Upstate
Empire State Chapter of Associated Builders &
Contractors
Central Hudson Gas & Electric
NYS Gas & Electric
National Fuel
Consolidated Edison
National Grid
Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
NYS Association for Affordable Housing
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce