



**Satellite Broadcasting
and Communications
Association**

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Testimony of Lisa Volpe McCabe
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Chairman Finegold, Chairman Morrissey and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify here today regarding Senate Bill 1519. I am Lisa McCabe, Director of Public Policy and Outreach for the Satellite Broadcasting & Communications Association of America ("SBCA"). The SBCA is opposed to the bill as drafted.

The SBCA is the national trade organization representing all segments of the satellite industry with its largest members being the national satellite TV providers DIRECTV and DISH Network. Our association also represents the interests of distributors, installers and about 140 retailers located in Massachusetts who serve about 275,000 satellite television customers in Massachusetts.

To meet consumer demand in the highly competitive multi-channel market, the satellite industry is constantly updating its technology and business practices to provide the best in customer support and satisfaction. The only way to keep the satellite installation network informed and educated of these developments is through a targeted training and certification program.

Since 2001, the SBCA has administered the National Standards and Testing Program (NSTP). The NSTP is the nationally recognized industry certification program for the installation of consumer satellite television services. The course covers all aspects of satellite television technology and installation and is designed to improve customer satisfaction and industry awareness. Since the program's inception, more than 100,000 technicians have been certified through the SBCA. The SBCA continues to certify more than 2,000 new technicians every month.

The SBCA has a strong history of working with states and localities to integrate the NSTP into their regulatory framework. This has allowed these states and localities to ensure that their satellite installation professionals receive the most up-to-date training and education. Connecticut and Rhode Island have adopted the SBCA's National Standards and Testing Program as the testing criteria for their state's licensing examination.

The success of these regulatory frameworks is contingent upon one very important principle: For licensing regulations to be effective they must reflect the scope of work they seek to regulate.

However, as proposed, the experience and training requirements for both telecommunications contractors and technicians is burdensome and unnecessary, and does not reflect the scope of work being performed by satellite installation professionals.

Such mandates would make it nearly impossible for independent retailers, as well as DIRECTV and DISH Network, to hire and train new satellite installation professionals. This will: 1) significantly increase the cost of a satellite installation, a cost borne by the consumer; 2) significantly delay the time for an installation; and 3) significantly disrupt competition in the multi-channel video marketplace.

Moreover, the experience and training requirements paint the entire telecommunications industry with a broad brush. The telecommunications industry is comprised of several disciplines, each with its own skill set and knowledge base. This one-size fits all measure is too simplistic and does not take into account the scope of work being performed from one industry to the next.

Further, we urge this committee to consider adopting a regulatory framework closer in scope to what is already being enforced in neighboring states. Matching regulatory requirements with other states would make reciprocity workable helping to create more opportunity for installers in all of New England.

Rather than mandate a one-size fits all licensing requirement, the SBICA recommends this board have authority to create sub-categories and requirements specific to each of the telecommunications fields.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address this committee. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.