

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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February 2, 1938

Hon. F. Harold Dubord
101 Main Street
Waterville, Maine

Dear Brother Dubord:

Dr. Campbell and I have had many meetings over the provisions of the recently enacted law relating to plumbers. It seemed to both of us obvious that the provisions of section 183C gave the board the right to issue a license to any applicant for either of the two types of license who could establish satisfactorily that he had been in the business or occupation for two years prior to June 30, 1937. We felt that this meant that an applicant for a journeyman plumber's license was entitled to a license without examination if he could prove that he had worked as a journeyman plumber for two years, and that the same principle would apply to an applicant for a master plumber's license. That is, that he must prove that he had been operating as a master plumber for two years. This would mean that an applicant for a master plumber's license who could not prove that he had worked as a master plumber, or been in business as such for the two-year period, would not be, automatically, entitled to a license but must take examination.

I appreciate the force of your suggestion that, regardless of the qualifications of a plumber, and regardless of how long he has worked for someone else he could not under this ruling go into business for himself without taking an examination. This, apparently, is the correct interpretation and from the talk made at the hearing and in the Legislature during the progress of this bill, I gather that this is just exactly what the master plumbers and journeyman plumbers who introduced the bill and were working for its passage, sought to accomplish.

This law, as you know, is not one that was instigated by any State official. Attempts to pass similar acts have been before the Legislature for several terms and this bill, like the barbers' bill and the real estate brokers' bill, that were passed at the last session, were passed at the instigation of the people in these various businesses in an attempt to improve conditions in their respective professions. They had in mind in this particular bill, rightly or wrongly, that a man can be a very fine, capable journeyman plumber for many years and not possess

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the business ability, knowledge and integrity that would qualify him to operate as a master plumber and deal fairly with the public and with the various regulations of the State and local community.

If these two clients of yours are qualified to be master plumbers and are interested in the profession there will shortly be an opportunity for them to take the examination that will be given by the board, and probably no one will bother them very much prior to the opportunity to take the examination. Certainly I should not be in sympathy with any attempt to make any trouble for them between this time and the coming of the next examination, provided they were willing to take the examination.

If you are in Augusta sometime I should be glad to have you come in and discuss this with me and with Dr. Campbell because it has given me considerable concern.

With kindest personal regards,

Very truly yours,

Francis W. Burkett
Attorney General

FUB:H