



National Electrical Manufacturers Association

Representative Brian Dempsey
Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee
State House
Room 243
Boston, MA 02133
Via Email: Brian.Dempsey@mahouse.gov

April 6, 2016

Re: Support for H 4103

Dear Mr. Chairman,

On behalf the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) Fire, Life Safety, Security and Emergency Communications Section, I am writing to express support for H 4103 which, if passed, would require carbon monoxide detection requirements for all K-12 schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as new and substantially remodeled restaurants. H 4103 was released out of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security in March and now sits before the House Ways & Means Committee for review and passage.

Massachusetts schools and restaurants are not immune to the dangers of carbon monoxide, as several incidents over the past few years have demonstrated. For example, in March 2014 the East Douglas Elementary School had to evacuate 77 kindergarten students due to a CO leak from a faulty boiler. 18 people, including 16 kindergartners, were rushed to hospitals. Similar incidents occurred in October 2015 and January of this year at schools in Newton and Waltham, respectively.

In July 2014, fire safety officials in Plymouth responded to a fire alarm at a local restaurant to investigate a faulty piece of equipment that was seen emitting smoke. A member of the crew happened to be wearing a personal CO monitor, which picked up extremely high levels of CO in the air. The restaurant employees, customers and residents of the building were all at risk because there was no fixed CO detection device in the restaurant. Just a few months earlier, two restaurants in the Chestnut Hill area of Boston also had to be evacuated due to CO leaking from a faulty oven.

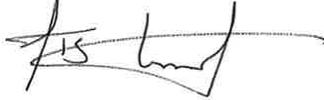
CO is an invisible, colorless, odorless and tasteless gas that can make people, especially children, sick with symptoms that may seem like the flu. It can be deadly. It is because of these characteristics that CO is often called the “stealth killer.” Gas-powered equipment common to schools and restaurants – such as heaters, boilers, ovens and generators – can emit CO.

By providing simple devices and systems which detect the gas, these near tragedies can be avoided, ensuring that they never escalate to serious injury or death. The Commonwealth has a law which requires homes to have CO detection, but does not

require that same protection for restaurants and schools. H 4103 would largely resolve this issue and meaningfully enhance public health and safety for the Commonwealth's citizens.

Thank you in advance for your leadership to advance H 4103. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this bill further, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JS Stewart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan Stewart
Manager, Government Relations
National Electrical Manufacturers Association
703-841-3245
jonathan.stewart@nema.org

NEMA is the association of electrical equipment manufacturers, founded in 1926 and headquartered in Rosslyn, Virginia. It represents nearly 400 electrical and medical imaging manufacturers. Our combined industries account for more than 400,000 American jobs and more than 7,000 facilities across the U.S. Domestic production exceeds \$117 billion per year. NEMA Fire, Life Safety, Security and Emergency Communication members manufacture fire, smoke, and carbon monoxide detection and warning equipment.