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New Jersey Governor Signs Hearth Specialist Legislation into Law

(CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA) – The Mid-Atlantic Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association (MAHPBA) is thrilled to announce today that New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy signed S1303/A3118, also known as the “Master Hearth Specialist Bill” into law on Friday, August 23rd, 2019. The MHS bill creates licensing for “Master Hearth Specialist.”

The passage of this legislation corrects the unforeseen consequences created in 2007 when the state established a license for heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration contractors.

Fireplace installers, also known as hearth specialists, sought enactment of the legislation because they feared losing their ability to continue to install and service gas lines, prefabricated fireplaces, inserts, decorative appliances, B-Vent and Direct Vent Flues, and any flue pipe that removes products of combustion, to the HVACR Contractor.

This fear became a reality in 2017, when the HVACR regulation on exclusivity was proposed and MAHPBA members began to experience denied permits because they were not HVACR licensees or plumbers.

“Due to the tireless efforts of MAHPBA’s Government Affairs team, MAHPBA was able to reverse enforcement, hold off the regulation on exclusivity, and finally, pass legislation that will protect our membership for years to come” said Kurt Evers, MAHPBA President.

“It is an honor to have the MHS bill signed into law during my time on the board; this has been six years in the making. It is exciting and a huge win for our industry. Our members were on the verge of being put out of business or having their businesses reduced to the sales only” added Evers.

“Experience and education are the keys to public safety” said Ron Kessner, MAHPBA’s Vice President and Government Affairs Committee Chair. “The passage of the MHS bill does more than just save jobs. It also protects the public by now requiring the Hearth Professional to be experienced, educated and state licensed.”

“The passage of the MHS bill is a huge victory and one our industry can be proud of, but we are not done yet” added Kessner. “The next step is to guide our membership through the licensing process.”

MAHPBA will host informational sessions for New Jersey hearth professionals on September 24th at the Clarion Hotel in Somerset, New Jersey. Session times are 2:00 – 4:00 PM and 7:00 – 9:00 PM.

MAHPBA also plans to schedule multiple NFI classes and exams prior to the MHS bill enactment date.

The [Mid-Atlantic Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association](#) is a trade association representing the hearth, patio and barbecue industries in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia.

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