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January 8, 2008

Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal  
Elevator Safety Division-James R. Thompson Center  
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 4-600  
Chicago, IL. 60601  
Mr. Robert Capuani, Director

Re: Board Decision on Periodic Testing

Gentlemen:

At our most recent meeting, this subject came up during the new business portion of the meeting. Your February agenda lists a planned discussion of the state decision to allow state-licensed QEI employees of state-licensed elevator companies to temporarily witness periodic hydraulic pressure testing until February 28, 2008. We would like to offer our comments and recommendation to the State Elevator Safety Division Board for consideration as you review the decision to rescind or extend the temporary provision.

Our state licensed contractor member's support extending the time line to December 31, 2008 for this temporary test witnessing. Their concerns remain unchanged from the very first board discussions last summer in 2007. Arranging for AHJ inspectors to provide the witnessing service is difficult based on the available inspectors qualified under state guidelines. Appointments to arrange for inspectors sometimes extended out weeks in advance of the test date. Also to be considered is the sheer amount of units requiring testing beyond hydraulic elevator category 1 tests. There are numerous traction electric elevators that, under state code, require category 1 & 5 testing. We have no idea how many new installations have final acceptance testing delayed. However, we all know that this can present a problem for building owners when they cannot obtain occupancy permits on time, have to extend construction financing, and delay opening ceremonies tied into community marketing and publicity.

The area of the state we speak to covers the 6 collar counties around Chicago (not including the City of Chicago) and those rapidly growing areas beyond that. If we are experiencing this phenomena the rest of the down state counties must also be feeling the pressure to find a way to accomplish the witnessing task. We therefore ask for favorable consideration of the extension to allow the licensed contractor companies to "catch up" and also to extend time for more inspectors to become qualified. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this element of elevator safety.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Chicago Elevator Association

Gary Schreiber, President