



**MAURA HEALEY**  
GOVERNOR

**KIM DRISCOLL**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Division of Occupational Licensure**

1000 Washington Street, Suite 710  
Boston, Massachusetts 02118

**EDWARD A. PALLESCHI**  
UNDERSECRETARY OF CONSUMER  
AFFAIRS AND BUSINESS  
REGULATION

**LAYLA R. D'EMILIA**  
COMMISSIONER, DIVISION OF  
OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE

**BOARD OF STATE EXAMINERS OF  
PLUMBERS AND GAS FITTERS**

**February 22, 2023, Listening Session on Alternatives to Traditional  
Ladies' and Men's rooms**

**AGENDA**

The Board of State Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters conducted a remote Board meeting on  
**Wednesday, February 22, 2023, starting at 9 A.M.**

**In accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 30A § 20, the  
Board of State Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters convened a Special Listening Session via  
telephone/video conference:**

The topics shown below were discussed at the aforementioned meeting:

***Member and Staff Attendance***

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>APPOINTMENT</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Mr. Joseph McNamee	Member, Master Gas Fitter	X	
Mr. Harold Knight	Member, Journeyman Plumber	X	
Mr. John Cruz	Member, LP Installer	X	
Mr. Bahig A. Kaldas, P. E.	Member, Plumbing Engineer	X	
Mr. Joseph V. Waskiewicz	Member, Master Plumber	X	
Mr. Wayne Thomas	Member Journeyman Gasfitter	X	
Ms. Ruth Alfasso	Member, Dept. of Public Health	X	
Ms. Sarah Badway	Public Member		X
Mr. Dan Kilburn	Member, DOL Designee	X	
<b>STAFF</b>			
Mr. Charles Kilb	Board Legal Counsel	X	

Mr. Kenneth Peterson	Board Executive Director	X	
Mr. Michael Guida	Code Consultant	X	

**9:00 A.M. AGENDA REVIEW:** By Chairman Joseph McNamee

## **PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION**

The chair opened the meeting and provided the attendees the basic procedures for the meeting. He noted that while the Board had draft language which will be used for purposes of a yet to be scheduled formal public hearing, the feedback from this listening session will be used along with any feedback from that public hearing. He then provided information on how to participate both via computer and telephone.

Kelly Halley, a student from UMass Amherst, states that gender-neutral bathrooms have played a key role in the safety of non-binary students. Gendered bathrooms can create an unsafe environment for the LGBTQ community. Supports gender-inclusive bathrooms

Kairo Serna self-disclosed as a nonbinary student at UMass Amherst says that the students flocked to UMass Amherst because of the gender-neutral housing, but says they are inadequate. Trying to force transgender and genderqueer students to exist in spaces that are not designed for them is a humiliating experience and affects their quality of life overall.

Genny Beemyn is the Director of the Stonewall Center for LGBTQIA+ rights at UMass, and co-chair of the University's Bathroom and Restroom Working Group, working for gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, -says they have 175 gender-inclusive bathrooms, but considering the size of the campus, believes this is not enough, for everyone to feel safe in the bathrooms. She indicated a concern with requiring these bathrooms contain floor to ceiling partitions due to cost.

Tanya Neslusan, Executive Director of Mass Equality, says gender-neutral bathrooms are good for everybody and make people feel safer by fostering an inclusive environment. Also believes they are more efficient.

State Representative Mindy Domb, who represents the UMass Amherst district, has filed a bill to allow for zoning for general neutral bathrooms, without a variance application. Supports effort to change code so the variance is not needed and promotes gender-neutral bathrooms and safety for everyone.

Peter DeFreitas has been in the plumbing industry for 40 years and believes the proposed new code addresses many of the issues talked about so far. Code is a minimum requirement and people can always go above and beyond the minimum code. They can add more for specific communities. He also says people need to keep in mind those that identify as male or female and want gendered bathrooms. He believes these bathrooms should be based on location, and the code should consider people who may not be comfortable with such bathrooms.

State Representative Domb requested to supplement her comments, she stated that additional bathrooms beyond minimum requirements may involve additional resources that might not be available. Suggest that those looking for privacy should be provided single-stall bathrooms.

Maeve Wiesen, of Senator William Brownsburger office, encourages the board to draft a code while considering providing gender-neutral spaces outside of the higher education environment.

Kelly Halley requested to supplement her comments. She indicated she believed that people with disabilities would benefit from these bathrooms which would be cheaper to build then traditional gendered bathrooms.

Cho Yiu of MIT supports these bathrooms and opined that they should include urinals but the stall partitions and doors not be floor-to-ceiling because of safety concerns for parents of young children and to avoid extra lighting and floor drain costs.

Caitlin Peters is a student at UMass Amherst and lives in Webster Hall in gender-neutral housing, states that the college experience brings a lot of anxiety and the gender-neutral bathrooms significantly helped those anxieties and avoid lines.

Kairo Serna added that these gender-neutral bathrooms(Webster Hall) are for freshmen only and next year they will not have access to gender-neutral facilities, supports having these bathrooms in other public facilities.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The chair called for any further comments, seeing no one, he called for the main meeting to be adjourned, this was voted on by John Cruz and seconded by Ruth Alfasso at 9:48, A.M.

Staff kept the meeting open until noon in the event there were any late attendees seeking to provide comments. No further attendees appeared.

## **ITEMS RELIED UPON IN THE MEETING**

Agenda