

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1757

As Passed House

March 16, 1993

Title: An act relating to continuing education requirements for electricians.

Brief Description: Requiring continuing education for electricians.

Sponsors: Representatives Heavey, Veloria, Brumsickle, Lisk and King.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:

Commerce & Labor, February 26, 1993, DP;

Passed House, March 16, 1993, 92-5.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; G. Cole, Vice Chair; Lisk, Ranking Minority Member; Conway; Horn; King; Springer; and Veloria.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Jim Kelley (786-7166).

Background: In order to work as an electrician, a person must have a journeyman electrician certificate of competency, a specialty electrician certificate of competency, or an electrical training certificate issued by the Department of Labor and Industries, unless the specific activity is exempted from the certification requirement.

The department issues a certificate of competency to qualified applicants who pass an examination administered by the department. The certificate expires every two years, but, is renewed without examination upon application and the payment of a fee. Reexamination may be required if the certificate has been revoked, suspended, or not renewed within 90 days after the expiration date. There is no requirement of continuing education for certified electricians.

Summary of Bill: In order to renew a journeyman or specialty electrician certificate of competency, the certificate holder must demonstrate to the department that he or she has satisfactorily completed an annual eight-hour continuing education course. The contents and requirements of the course shall be determined by the director and approved by the electrical board. The certificate shall be renewed every three years.

A continuing education course offered in another state may meet the requirements for renewing a certificate if the department is satisfied that the course is comparable in nature to the course required in Washington.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 22, 1993.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: It is important for electricians to periodically sharpen their skills. The time for renewal of the certification should be every three years, because that is how often the Electrical Code is updated. The continuing education could include an update on the code. This profession is very fluid and the technology is rapidly advancing. Members of other professions are required to update their skills; electricians should also be required to do so. This is a safety issue. Electricians are exposed to high levels of energy which cannot be seen or heard. The bill is revenue neutral and has broad support.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Larry Stevens, United Subcontractor Association; Peggy M. Boe, National Electrical Contractors Association; William Zenk, IBEW; Greg Teeple, IBEW, Local 48; Jordy Andrew, IBEW, Local 46; Edward Barner, Metro Training Trust; and Joe Brewer, Department of Labor and Industries (all in favor).