

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5280

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 12, 1993

Brief Description: Creating a certification program for contractors.

SPONSORS: Senators Hargrove, Erwin, Owen, Sutherland and Jesernig

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Moore, Chairman; Prentice, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Cantu, Fraser, Newhouse, Pelz, Sutherland, and Vognild.

Staff: Dave Cheal (786-7576)

Hearing Dates: February 24, 1993; March 2, 1993

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

BACKGROUND:

Currently the state does not require any evidence of competency, experience, or training in order to become a registered contractor. In hiring a registered contractor, a customer is assured only that the contractor has posted a statutory bond of \$6,000 if a general contractor, or \$4,000 if a specialty contractor, and that the contractor has met certain other tax and business legal requirements.

Some states issue licenses to contractors based on a certain showing of competency or minimum training requirement.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Labor and Industries is required to develop a voluntary certificate of competency program by July 1, 1994. The program would be for both general and specialty contractors and would be in addition to the current registration program.

An examination would be prepared by the department to determine general knowledge and technical information, and building codes and other legal requirements. All applicants for the examination must be registered contractors and must prove the completion of a course of study in the construction trade at a school approved by the department. The course of study and the examination may be waived if the contractor has at least two years of experience at the effective date of the act.

The certificate is renewable on the birthday of the applicant every two years. Fees for the examination and certificate are required to cover the cost of the program.

The certificate may be used in advertising, but making a false claim of holding a certificate will subject the contractor to a two-year suspension of his or her registration.

A seven-member volunteer advisory committee is created to advise the department on this program.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: yes

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Consumers need to have some evidence of competency on the part of contractors they hire. Competent contractors should benefit from their achievement demonstrating their knowledge through an exam.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Contractors competency needs to be studied during interim. This will just provide an advertising gimmick.

TESTIFIED: Senator Hargrove; Doug Bohlke (pro); Dick Ducharme (con)

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

The substantive provisions of the bill are replaced by a study.

The Department of Labor and Industries is required to conduct a study to determine whether increased regulation of contractors is appropriate and to report its findings to the Legislature by February 1, 1994.