

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5749

As Reported By House Committee On:

Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to regulation of plumbers.

Brief Description: Providing for a certificate of competency as a medical gas piping installer.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Senators Heavey, McCaslin, Winsley, Haugen and Deccio).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 4/2/97, 4/3/97 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Chairman; Conway, Ranking Minority Member; Wood, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Clements; Cole; Hatfield and Lisk.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Honeyford, Vice Chairman.

Staff: Walters, Selwyn (786-7117).

Background: The Department of Labor and Industries administers a certification program for persons wishing to engage in the trade of plumbing. Plumbing means the craft of installing, altering, repairing and renovating portable water systems, liquid waste systems, and medical gas piping in a building. Medical gas piping means oxygen, nitrous oxide, high pressure nitrogen, medical compressed air, and medical vacuum systems.

The department issues journeyman plumber certificates of competency, speciality plumber certificates of competency, or temporary certificates to qualified individuals who wish to engage in the plumbing trade. An applicant for both the journeyman plumber and speciality plumber certificates must take an examination which tests general knowledge and practical procedures of the trade, and familiarity with the applicable plumbing codes and administrative rules of the department.

A contractor may not employ a person to engage in the plumbing trade unless the person has a temporary permit, or training certificate, or a certificate of competency as a journeyman plumber or speciality plumber.

A plumbing apprentice may work in the trade if directly supervised by a certified journeyman or certified specialty plumber. An apprentice and all individuals learning the plumbing trade are required to obtain a training certificate from the department. The ratio requirement of apprentices to certified journeyman plumbers, or certified speciality plumbers is one to one.

The department may suspend or revoke a certificate of competency or a temporary permit for certain specified infractions.

Summary of Amended Bill: A medical gas piping installer is a journeyman plumber who has been issued a medical gas piping installer endorsement.

A person may not engage in medical gas piping installation unless he or she has a certificate of competency as a journeyman plumber and a medical gas piping installer endorsement. A trainee may engage in the installation of medical gas piping if he or she has a training certificate and is directly supervised by a person with a medical gas piping installer endorsement 100 percent of a working day on a one-to-one ratio. A contractor may not employ a person to install medical gas piping unless the person employed has a certificate of competency as a journeyman plumber and a medical gas piping installer endorsement.

An applicant for a medical gas piping installer endorsement has a duty to prove to the department that he or she meets the requirements for the endorsement established by the department. An applicant must pass a written and practical examination, and pay the required fee. The department approves training courses and sets fees for the courses. The department may enter into a contract with a professional testing agency to develop, administer and score the medical gas piping installer examination.

Reference to the Commission on Vocational Education is deleted and replaced with the Work Force Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The amended bill clarifies that a certified medical gas piping installer supervising a trainee must have a medical gas piping installer endorsement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect on July 1, 1998.

Testimony For: The installation of medical piping is very technical. Therefore, the requirement that a journeyman plumber receive a medical gas piping installer endorsement will ensure individuals installing medical gas piping are well trained and competent.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Kevin Morris, Department of Labor and Industries; and Dan Sexton, United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters.