

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1874

As Passed House

March 11, 1997

Title: An act relating to electrical inspections within county road rights of way.

Brief Description: Modifying electrical inspections within county road rights of way.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Transportation Policy & Budget (originally sponsored by Representatives Robertson, O'Brien and Fisher).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation Policy & Budget: 2/27/97, 3/3/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/11/97, 97-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY & BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Hankins, Vice Chairman; Mielke, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Blalock, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cooper, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Buck; Cairnes; Constantine; DeBolt; Gardner; Hatfield; Johnson; Murray; O'Brien; Ogden; Radcliff; Robertson; Scott; Skinner; Sterk; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Reema Shawa (786-7301).

Background: In late 1995 the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) expanded the parameters of their inspections from examining the electrical service panel in county rights of way to inspecting the actual traffic signals, but failed to provide the necessary training to allow their inspectors to do so. Prior to this expansion, the counties had been installing, maintaining and inspecting traffic signals for over 20 years.

Exemptions from L&I electrical inspections are currently granted to incorporated cities, electricity supply agencies owned and operated by a city or town, and all rights of way along state highways, authorizing the Department of Transportation to construct and maintain materials, devices, appliances and equipment.

Summary of Bill: County road rights of way are exempted from L&I electrical inspections, provided the subject county road department maintains and enforces an equal, higher or better standard of construction, and materials, devices, appliances and equipment than is required by current law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Counties have been inspecting their own traffic signals for over 20 years and feel that L&I is not adequately equipped or trained to do such inspections.

Testimony Against: Taking this responsibility away from the department is taking work away from union journeymen.

Testified: Eric Berger, County Road Administration Board (pro); Christina Mudgett, Snohomish County Public Works Department (pro); Thomas Ballard, Pierce County (pro); Richard King, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 46 (con); and Don Anders, Department of Transportation (pro).