

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2578

Brief Description: Modifying the composition of the electrical board.

Sponsors: Representative McMorris

Hearing: January 22, 1998

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Labor and Industries regulates the installation, repair and maintenance of electrical wires, equipment, and services. This regulatory process involves the licensing of electrical contractors, the certification of electrical administrators, and the permitting and inspection of electrical work. The department inspects all electrical wiring, appliances, devices and equipment regulated by the electricians and electrical installations statute. The statute exempts from inspection electrical wiring, appliances, devices, or equipment, or installations owned and operated by a utility.

The department is helped in its regulatory functions by an Electrical Board. The ten-member Board consists of an electrical utility employee; three licensed electrical contractors, one of whom may represent a trade association in the electrical industry; a manufacturer of electrical materials; three certified electricians; a professional electrical engineer; and a representative of the public with knowledge of the electrical industry. The Chief Electrical Inspector is secretary to the Board. Members of the Board are appointed by the Governor with the advice of the Director of the Department of Labor and Industries.

The Board advises the Director of the Department of Labor and Industries on the regulation of electricians and electrical installations. The Board makes recommendations to the director on the issuance or repeal of rules, and hears appeals regarding citations issued by the department for violations of the electricians and electrical installations law.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

The bill increases the membership of the Electrical Board to eleven members: (1) an employee or officer of a private electrical utility; (2) an employee or officer of a public electrical utility; (3) two licensed electrical contractors, one of whom may represent a trade association in the electrical industry; (4) a manufacturer of electrical materials; (5) two certified electricians; (6) a licensed professional electrical engineer with no connection to the

electrical industry; (7) a representative of the public with knowledge of the electrical industry, but with no connection to the electrical industry; and (8) two outside linemen.

The bill specifies staggered terms for each member. The first term of the private utility member is four years. The first term of one outside linesman is two years, and the term of the other linesman is three years. The Governor appoints the additional new members within ninety days of the effective date of the Act. The Chief Electrical Inspector provides staff assistance to the Board.

Rules considered by the Board and adopted by the department before ninety days after the effective date of the bill are void. The Board cannot consider any rule until ninety days after the effective date of the Act.

APPROPRIATION: None.

FISCAL NOTE: None.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.