

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 2578

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Commerce & Labor, February 27, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to expanding membership of the electrical board.

**Brief Description:** Expanding membership of the electrical board.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives McMorris and Wood).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Commerce & Labor: 2/26/98, 2/27/98 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Schow, Chair; Horn, Vice Chair; Anderson and Newhouse.

**Staff:** Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

**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 the 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 Amended Bill:** The electrical board is expanded to 13 members: one each a public utility and a private utility, three licensed electrical contractors, one manufacturer or distributor of electrical equipment, one member of the public, three certified electricians, one

licensed electrical engineer, one industrial manufacturer employing electricians, and one local government building official.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** In place of one member from either a public or private utility, there is one member from each.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** An industrial manufacturer should be restored to the board. A 13-member board will be a good cross-section. Local building officials are responsible for enforcement and should be on the board.

**Testimony Against:** Local government already has authority and should not have a vote on the board as well. There is no definition of a manufacturer. Individuals working on their own property are exempt from licensing. Industrial manufacturers have never been on the board and do not need to be. The board is being needlessly politicized and "bureaucracized." It needs to continue to be an industry board for expertise.

**Testified:** PRO: Mark Triplett, WA Association of Building Officials; Jean Rickman, WPUDA; Michael V. Glenn, Longview Fibre Company; Kent Granzow, Boeing; Bill Tezak, WSPA-Texaco; Randy LeValley, Kimberly-Clark Corporation; CON: Richard King, IBEW; Steve Washburn, NECA; Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Association.