

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2075

Brief Description: Reforming electrical inspection regulations.

Sponsors: Representatives Mulliken and Grant

Hearing: February 25, 1999

Brief Summary of Bill

- Counties, like cities, may elect to enact ordinances regulating electrical installations and conduct electrical inspections.
- The ordinances must be equal to or higher than the state electrical standards.

BACKGROUND:

The state electrical code establishes electrical wiring and equipment requirements for all types of residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings or structures. All equipment that uses, conveys, or is operated by electrical current must conform to the code and the rules developed by the Department of Labor and Industries.

The department generally inspects electrical wires and equipment and electrical installations statewide. However, cities and towns may elect to conduct their own electrical inspections. To do so, a city or town must enact ordinances or rules regulating electrical installations within their boundaries that are equal to, or higher than the standards established by the state electrical code. There are currently about 25 cities or towns throughout the state which conduct their own inspections.

Electrical inspectors employed by cities and towns that require electrical inspections must meet the same qualifications as those employed by the state. These qualifications are established by state law.

Counties do not have the authority to adopt standards or conduct electrical inspections.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

Counties are authorized to enact and enforce their own electrical ordinances relating to electrical wiring and installation. The ordinances must be equal to, or higher than the standards established by the state electrical code. Counties opting to enact their own standards may inspect electrical equipment and installations within their jurisdiction.

As with cities and towns, inspectors employed by counties to conduct electrical inspections must meet the same qualifications as state inspectors. Counties opting to perform their own inspections must give first consideration for employment to inspectors currently employed with the Department of Labor and Industries.

RULES AUTHORITY: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule making powers of an agency.

FISCAL NOTE: Requested February 23, 1999.

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