

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1324

As Reported by House Committee On:

Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to expanding membership of the electrical board by appointment of one outside line worker.

Brief Description: Expanding membership of the electrical board by appointment of one outside line worker.

Sponsors: Representatives Conway, Campbell, Wood, Kenney and Hunt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 2/7/02 [DP].

<h4>Brief Summary of Bill</h4>

- Adds one outside line worker to the Electrical Board.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Chandler, Kenney and Lysen.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Clements, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134); Chris Cordes (786-7103).

Background:

State law requires that persons who install or maintain wires or equipment to convey electric current be licensed. It does not require that utilities and persons employed by utilities who install, repair, and maintain lines, wires, apparatus, or equipment used to light streets or public areas, or to transmit or distribute electricity to customers be licensed. The workers who construct and maintain electric transmission and distribution facilities are known as outside line workers.

The Department of Labor and Industries licenses electrical contractors and certifies electrical administrators. The department also regulates the installation, repair, and maintenance of electrical wires, equipment, and services.

The Electrical Board advises the director of the department on electrical and telecommunications installation standards, inspection procedures, and adoption of rules pertaining to electrical inspections. The board also reviews appeals of license revocations and suspensions, as well as other citations.

The 13 voting members of the board represent various segments of the electrical and telecommunications industries and the public. The one nonvoting board member is a city building official. These board members are appointed by the Governor with the advice of the director of the department. The secretary of the board is the chief electrical inspector.

The board meets at least once each quarter. The board members are compensated no more than \$50 per day for days in which they attend official meetings or perform official duties. They are also reimbursed for travel expenses. These costs are paid from the electrical license fund.

Summary of Bill:

One outside line worker is added as a voting member of the electrical board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The inside electrical workers changed their position on this issue after the telecommunications workers certification bill passed. Because the board includes a representative of the utility companies, it makes sense for an outside line worker representative also to be on the board. This change to the board composition should not cause problems because the board nearly always reaches consensus on issues. The board has had difficult issues to deal with that address the utility exemptions.

Testimony Against: The board advises the department on regulations that deal with electrical work. Utility companies and their employees are exempt from that regulation. There is no reason for either the utilities or their employees to be advising the department about matters from which they are exempt. The current board position for utility companies could be interpreted in a way that would allow an outside line worker to be

appointed to the position.

Testified: (In support) Dick King, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local No. 176; Tamara Warnke, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local No. 77; and Mark Anderson, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local No.125.

(Opposed) Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Association.