

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6561

As of February 01, 2006

Title: An act relating to elevator mechanic licenses.

Brief Description: Revising requirements for elevator mechanic licenses.

Sponsors: Senators Rockefeller and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce, Research & Development: 1/31/06.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Staff: John Dziedzic (786-7784)

Background: The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) regulates elevator contractors and elevator mechanics. As a general rule, only a licensed elevator mechanic is authorized to install or maintain elevators, escalators, and other conveyances to which the public has access. There are nine categories of elevator mechanic licenses.

To qualify for an elevator mechanic license without an examination, an applicant must have (1) a certificate from a nationally recognized training program; (2) successfully completed a qualifying apprenticeship program; or (3) a valid elevator mechanic license from a state that has a reciprocity agreement with Washington, and that Washington recognizes as having substantially equal elevator standards.

Applicants required to take the state elevator mechanic examination must provide L&I with evidence of at least three years' experience working on the category of conveyance for which the license is sought, and pass an examination. The work experience must be verified by the applicant's current or former in-state employers or public agency employer.

Summary of Bill: No more than two years of the required three years of qualifying elevator work experience may have been performed in another state with substantially equal elevator licensing standards, but only if L&I is able to (1) verify the applicant's past work history; and (2) determine, after consultation with the state's elevator regulating agency, whether the applicant's employer is in good standing under that state's laws.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: A person who has worked on elevators and other conveyances for a private entity in another state currently cannot use any of that experience to qualify for an examination

to become a licensed elevator mechanic in Washington. This bill would allow L&I to consider up to two years of out-of-state elevator mechanic experience towards the three-year experience requirement, so that people who are qualified can get credit for valid, verifiable experience, regardless of where the experience was obtained.

Testimony Against: The bill lowers and weakens the prerequisites for persons from out-of-state who are attempting to qualify to take the elevator mechanic licensing examination. Current law requires that elevator experience must be under the auspices of an elevator or conveyance construction company. As drafted, the bill would allow out-of-state applicants to satisfy the experience requirement based on conveyance work for a business that uses the elevator, rather than for a company solely in the business of elevator construction and maintenance.

Testimony Other: There is no substitute for adequate experience and training to assure safety for workers and the conveyance-riding public.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Rockefeller, Prime Sponsor; Patrick Woods, Jack Day, Labor & Industries.

CON: Charles Val, International Union of Elevator Constructors, Local 19.

OTHER: Bill Watson, City of Seattle.