

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2254

As of February 27, 2014

Title: An act relating to telecommunications work experience for purposes of eligibility toward limited energy specialty electrician certification.

Brief Description: Concerning telecommunications work experience for purposes of eligibility toward limited energy specialty electrician certification.

Sponsors: Representatives Manweller, Sells and Johnson.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/14, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/26/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) regulates the electrical industry in Washington and issues licenses to contractors engaged in the business of doing electrical work, and issues certificates to individual electricians to perform electrical work. Contractors and electricians can apply for a license or certificate as either a general electrical contractor/electrician or as a specialty contractor/electrician. A general electrical license or certificate encompasses all phases and all types of electrical and telecommunications installations. A specialty license or certificate encompasses a limited scope of work as described in the Washington Administrative Code.

A person or business engaged in the business of installing or maintaining telecommunications systems must have either a telecommunications contractor license, a general electrical license (01), or a limited energy system specialty license (06). Individual electrician certification is not required for telecommunications work.

An individual seeking certification as an electrician must first pass an examination. In order to take the examination, an applicant must have the requisite amount of classroom instruction and work experience, or have successfully completed an approved apprenticeship program. Specialty certificates require either 2000 or 4000 hours of supervised work experience.

The limited energy system (06) specialty is limited to the installation of signaling and low-voltage circuits and related equipment, e.g., telecommunications, HVAC/R wiring, fire

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protection signaling systems, burglar alarms, or public address systems. An individual seeking certification must have 4000 hours of supervised work experience in order to take the (06) examination.

Summary of Bill: Before July 1, 2015, an electrical worker with a training certificate may apply one hour of every two hours of unsupervised telecommunications system installation work experience toward eligibility for an (06) limited energy system certificate examination.

The telecommunications work must be obtained while working for a licensed (01) general electrical contractor or a licensed (06) limited energy specialty contractor, and evidence of the work experience must be submitted to L&I.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill will allow some telecom installers to count work hours toward a specialty electrician license examination. The bill establishes a grandfathering process that everybody is happy with. It is difficult for unlicensed telecom installers to get the hours needed to take the test because it is difficult to work with a licensed electrician. This bill will allow more people to get licensed and work.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Manweller, prime sponsor; Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Assn.; Kirk Blair, Shawn Dorman, Wendy Brown, citizens.