

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6226

As of February 23, 2016

Title: An act relating to adoption of the International Plumbing Code as an alternative recognized building code and updating the related state plumbing examination requirements.

Brief Description: Concerning adoption of the International Plumbing Code as an alternative recognized building code.

Sponsors: Senators Warnick, Becker, Schoesler, Dammeier, Rivers and Braun.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 1/13/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7461)

Background: The State Building Code (SBC). The SBC provides statewide minimum performance standards and requirements for construction and construction materials consistent with accepted standards for engineering, fire, and life safety. The SBC is comprised of model codes - including building, residential, fire, and plumbing codes, adopted by reference in statute - as well as designated climate zones for building purposes and rules developed and adopted by the State Building Code Council (State Council).

In regards to the plumbing codes, the state has adopted by reference most of the provisions contained in the Uniform Plumbing Code and Uniform Plumbing Code Standards, as published by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.

State Plumbing Examination Requirements. The Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) is required to prepare a written examination to be given to applicants for certificates of competence for journey level plumbers and specialty plumbers. The examination tests the applicant's general knowledge on technical information and practical procedures as well as whether the applicant is familiar with the applicable plumbing codes and L&I's administrative rules.

Summary of Bill: The State Building Code. As an alternative to the current statutorily adopted plumbing code, the state adopts the International Plumbing Code, as published by

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the International Code Council, Inc. Four sections of this code are not adopted, including the provisions regarding:

- a code official's right of entry
- unsafe plumbing
- making connections after an order to disconnect, and
- the international code's specified appeal process.

The State Council may not use any funds or resources to review or modify the 2015 version of the newly adopted International Plumbing Code.

State Plumbing Examination Requirements. L&I's examination for certificates of competency for journey level plumbers and specialty plumbers specifically includes the applicant's familiarity with the International Plumbing Code.

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: Thirty-five states already use the International Plumbing code as their standard code. The code is user-friendly and available to plumbers and consumers online. The use of this code would save people money on their plumbing projects. This bill makes the code an alternative and does not mandate its use. The code is broader in scope, embraces new technologies, and adds flexibility. Limiting the State Council's review will reduce the cost of the bill.

CON: The public is well-protected by the current codes and people do not have issues with them. The bill will increase costs due to the training requirements and those costs will be passed on to the contractors and consumers. This bill will be a disaster for the industry and create huge problems by having two codes in effect. Plumbers will have to be licensed under both codes. Two codes will cause confusion, mistakes will happen, and plumbers will have the added expense of purchasing copies of the code.

OTHER: We like local choices but have concerns with the training provisions and the limitations placed on the State Council. The industry needs more time to review the optional nature of these codes. L&I cannot retest and certify the plumbers within the 90 days before the bill takes effect. The bill does not allow grandfathering of existing licensees.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Kraig Stevenson, International Code Council; Gary Allsup.

CON: Bruce Davis, Sr, Day & Nite Plumbing & Heating, Inc / Targeted Technician Training; Larry Stevens, Mechanical Contractors Association of Western Wash; Ed Kommers, Mechanical Contractors Assn of Western WA; Todd Allred, Allreds Mechanical Solutions

LLC; marc Schoenberg, IAPMO Plumbing Inspector; Ed Holmes, Vice-Chair Washington State Plumbers advisory; larry fischer.

OTHER: Amy Brackenbury, Washington Association of Building Officials; Steve Lindstrom, Sno-King Water-Sewer District Coalition; Tammy Fellin, Labor and Industries.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.