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**HOUSE BILL 2082**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Fosse, Low, Fitzgibbon, Berry, Reed, Ramel, Tharinger, Reeves, Paul, and Kloba

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1 AN ACT Relating to assessing the needs of the electrical  
2 transmission industry; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1)(a) The department of commerce must  
5 conduct a study of the employment and workforce education needs of  
6 the electrical transmission industry in the state. The purpose of the  
7 study is to: Ascertain labor shortages; identify challenges in  
8 recruiting, hiring, and retaining workers in certain enumerated  
9 trades; evaluate workforce succession planning in the industry; and  
10 assess short-term and long-term training and workforce needs, in  
11 order to meet the need to expand electrical transmission capacity  
12 infrastructure to meet the state's climate goals.

13 (b) The study must focus on the following groups in the  
14 electrical transmission workforce: Line workers; line clearance tree  
15 trimmers; and substation technicians.

16 (c) The department of commerce may contract with a third-party  
17 entity familiar with conducting similar studies. In conducting the  
18 study, the department of commerce or a third-party entity may consult  
19 with the employment security department, the department of labor and  
20 industries, appropriate centers of excellence, higher education  
21 institutions, workforce development centers, utilities, and any other

1 appropriate organizations or entities. To ensure duplication of  
2 efforts does not occur, the department of commerce or a third-party  
3 entity must coordinate with appropriate agencies and conduct a  
4 literature review of existing studies, data, or research related to  
5 the electrical transmission industry workforce that is currently  
6 ongoing or within the last five years.

7 (d) By December 1, 2024, the department of commerce must submit a  
8 preliminary report of the study to the appropriate committees of the  
9 legislature. At a minimum, the preliminary report must include the  
10 methodology that will be used to conduct the study and any  
11 demographic data or other information gathered regarding the  
12 electrical transmission industry workforce in preparation for the  
13 study.

14 (e) By November 1, 2025, the department of commerce must submit a  
15 final report to the appropriate committees of the legislature. At a  
16 minimum, the final report must include the following information:

17 (i) Estimates of electrical transmission industry jobs needed to  
18 expand electrical transmission capacity to meet the state's clean  
19 energy and climate goals inclusive of the workforce needed to  
20 maintain existing infrastructure;

21 (ii) An inventory of existing training programs and anticipated  
22 need for expansion of existing or additional training programs to  
23 meet current and future workforce needs;

24 (iii) The numbers of apprentices in the classifications listed  
25 under (b) of this subsection;

26 (iv) Demographic data, such as age, of the workforce;

27 (v) Identification of gaps and barriers to a full electrical  
28 transmission workforce pool including, but not limited to, the loss  
29 of workers to retirement in the next five, 10, and 15 years, and  
30 other current and anticipated retention issues;

31 (vi) A comparison of wages between different jurisdictions in the  
32 state and between Washington and other neighboring states, including  
33 any incentives offered by other states;

34 (vii) Any data on the number of workers in the classifications  
35 listed under (b) of this subsection that completed training in the  
36 state and left the state to work in a different state;

37 (viii) Data on the number of out-of-state workers who enter  
38 Washington to meet workforce needs on large scale electrical  
39 transmission projects in Washington;

1 (ix) Key challenges that could emerge in the foreseeable future  
2 based on factors such as growth in demand for electricity and changes  
3 in energy production and availability; and

4 (x) Recommendations for the training, recruitment, and retention  
5 of the current and anticipated electrical transmission workforce.

6 (2)(a) By November 1, 2024, the department of commerce must  
7 convene an electrical transmission industry work group. The purpose  
8 of the work group is to provide advice, develop strategies, and make  
9 recommendations on efforts to support the needs of the electrical  
10 transmission industry workforce to meet the state's climate goals.

11 (b) The work group must consist of eight members, as follows:

12 (i) One representative from a labor organization located in  
13 Tacoma that represents line workers;

14 (ii) One representative from a labor organization located in  
15 Clark county that represents line workers;

16 (iii) One representative from a labor organization located in  
17 Spokane county that represents line workers;

18 (iv) One representative from a statewide labor organization that  
19 represents workers in line construction and workers from outside of  
20 the line worker industry;

21 (v) Two representatives from two different for-profit utilities;  
22 and

23 (vi) Two representatives from two different public utility  
24 districts.

25 (c) The work group must:

26 (i) Review the preliminary and final reports submitted by the  
27 department of commerce under this section and, if appropriate,  
28 recommend to the legislature any legislative changes needed to  
29 address issues raised in the reports; and

30 (ii) Periodically review the status of the workforce issues and  
31 provide ongoing input and recommendations to the legislature, state  
32 and local agencies, labor, and utilities regarding the needs and  
33 challenges of the electrical transmission industry.

34 (3) All requirements in this section are subject to the  
35 availability of amounts appropriated for the specific purposes  
36 described.

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