

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2254

As Reported by House Committee On:
Labor & Workforce Development

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:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workforce Development: 1/23/14, 1/24/14 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows, until July 1, 2015, certain telecommunications workers to apply unsupervised work experience towards meeting the requirements for a limited energy system specialty electrician certificate of competency.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Manweller, Ranking Minority Member; Condotta, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Christian, Green, G. Hunt, Moeller and Ormsby.

Staff: Joan Elgee (786-7106).

Background:

An electrical contractor license is required to engage in the business of installing or maintaining wires or equipment to convey electric current, or equipment to be operated by electric current. A general electrical (01) contractor license allows the licensee to engage in all aspects of the electrical business. Electrical contractor specialty licenses include limited energy (06) and telecommunications (09). The scope of 06 work is restricted to low-voltage circuits and includes telecommunications, certain alarms, and lighting control systems.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

To work as an electrician, an individual must have a journey level or specialty electrician certificate of competency, which is granted after the applicant passes the appropriate examination. The specialty certificates mirror the specialty contractor licenses. To take the journey level examination, an applicant must work in the electrical construction trade for at least 8,000 hours. For the limited energy specialty certificate, an applicant must work in the specialty for at least 4,000 hours to take the examination.

To obtain the necessary work experience to become a journey level or specialty electrician, an applicant must obtain an electrical training certificate, and in general, trainees must work under the supervision of a journey level or the appropriate specialty electrician.

Engaging in the business of installing or maintaining telecommunications systems requires a telecommunications specialty contractor 09 license. General electrical or limited energy specialty contractors may also engage in telecommunications work. Individual worker certification is not required for telecommunications work.

An administrative hearing decision held that work performed on cables that carry both data and low voltage electricity, such as power over Ethernet devices, is outside the scope of 09 work and requires an 06 electrician.

The Department of Labor and Industries (Department) issues licenses and certificates of competency and otherwise administers the regulation of electricians and electrical work.

Summary of Bill:

Before July 1, 2015, telecommunications workers who obtain a training certificate may apply unsupervised work experience towards obtaining the required work experience to take the examination to become a limited energy system 06 specialty electrician. The work experience must have been obtained while the worker was employed by a general electrical 01 or limited energy system specialty 06 contractor. The applicant receives one-hour credit for every two hours of work. Evidence of the work experience must be submitted in the form of an affidavit prescribed by the Department.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill anticipates changes in technology by allowing 09s to become 06s. With this bill, the Legislature won't be presented with another scope of practice bill in two years. An electrician received training from 09 contractors but they have been in the industry for 10 years. It's hard to get hours under an 06 or 01. People who have worked in the industry should be able to take the test. This bill will help the industry.

(Opposed) Under this bill, only time spent employed by an 01 or 06 contractor counts. Employees who work for an 09 contractor are excluded. There are 352, 09 contractors in the state. This exclusion is unfair and could be easily fixed.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Manweller, prime sponsor; Wendy Brown, David McLaughlin, Kirk Blair, and Shaun Dorran, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; and Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Association.

(Opposed) Karl Hanson, Syte Net Services Incorporated.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.