
Commerce & Labor Committee

SB 6586

Brief Description: Concerning electrical work on boilers.

Sponsors: Senators Honeyford and Prentice.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the moratorium on enforcement of electrical code requirements as applied to maintenance work on the electrical controls of a boiler performed by an employee of a service company for one year.
- Extends the deadline for industry boards to evaluate these requirements and report to the Legislature for one year.

Hearing Date: 2/23/04

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

Background:

The Department of Labor and Industries (Department) administers various state laws governing construction-related businesses and trades, including persons performing electrical and boiler work.

State law requires that nearly all work involving electrical wiring, appliances, devices, and equipment be inspected. It also requires that persons who engage in the business of installing or maintaining certain wires or equipment have either a general electrical contractor license or an appropriate specialty electrical contractor license. Persons who perform such work must be certified as journey level electricians or appropriate specialty electricians.

State law authorizes the Board of Boiler Rules to make rules governing the safe construction, installation, and use of boilers and unfired pressure vessels. These rules are enforced through annual or biannual safety inspections.

Legislation enacted in 2003 directed the Department to cease administering and enforcing electrical licensing, certification, and permitting/inspection requirements as applied to maintenance work on the electrical controls of a boiler performed by employees of service companies until July 1, 2004. It also directed the Electrical Board and the Board of Boiler Rules to evaluate whether these requirements should apply to such work, and to report their findings and recommendations, if any, to legislative committees by December 1, 2003.

The draft report includes a discussion of several options ranging from exempting certain boiler work from electrical code requirements to establishing new boiler code requirements. A majority of individuals at a stakeholder meeting supported the option of establishing a new boiler electrical specialty within the existing electrical program with oversight of the technical qualifications to be shared by the Electrical Board and the Board of Boiler Rules. None of the individuals supported the option of doing nothing. The draft report included one finding: that appropriate legislation could be developed for consideration in the 2004 legislative session. There were no recommendations.

Summary of Bill:

The moratorium on enforcement of electrical licensing, certification, and permitting/inspection requirements as applied to maintenance work on the electrical controls of a boiler performed by an employee of a service company is extended for one year, until July 1, 2005.

The deadline for the Electrical Board and the Board of Boiler Rules to evaluate whether these requirements should apply to such work, and to report their findings and recommendations, if any, to legislative committees is also extended for one year, until December 1, 2004.

Rules Authority: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule-making authority of an agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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