

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5986

As of January 31, 2018

Title: An act relating to plumber training and supervision.

Brief Description: Concerning plumber training and supervision.

Sponsors: Senator Fortunato.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Commerce: 1/31/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the required ratio for trainees to certified plumbers for specialty work to not more than three noncertified plumbers for every certified specialty plumber.
- Changes the required ratio for trainees to certified plumbers for journey level work to not more than two noncertified plumbers for every certified journey level plumber.
- Provides an expiration date on June 30, 2021.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Staff: Jarrett Sacks (786-7448)

Background: In general, to perform plumbing work, a person must have a journey level or specialty certificate, a temporary permit, or a trainee certificate issued by the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I). To receive a journey level or specialty certificate, a person must meet certain work requirements and pass an examination. To qualify as a journey level plumber, a person must have 8000 documented hours, and not less than four years, working as a plumber trainee under the supervision of a certified plumber. To qualify as a specialty plumber, the number of hours one must work to qualify varies by specialty.

Plumber trainees must have a trainee certificate and work under supervision. Trainees must be supervised by a person with a journey level or specialty certificate, or with a temporary permit. The supervisor must be on the same job site for a minimum of 75 percent of each

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working day. There may not be more than two noncertified plumbers for every one certified specialty plumber or journey level plumber working in a specialty, or more than one noncertified plumber for every one certified journey level plumber doing journey level work on a job site. Trainees must renew their licenses every year until they pass the examination to become a journey level or specialty plumber. Additionally, trainees must take eight hours of continuing education per year.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): From July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2021, the required ratio of trainees to certified plumbers on a job site is changed to the following:

- not more than three noncertified plumbers working on a job site for every certified specialty plumber or journey level plumber doing specialty work; and
- not more than two noncertified plumbers working on a job site for every certified journey level plumber doing journey level work.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute: PRO: Plumbers are getting older and the industry cannot train new plumbers fast enough. Changing the ratio will allow more plumber trainees, which is what the industry needs. It is challenging to develop a new workforce for many reasons, including the on-call nature of some plumbing work.

OTHER: Changing the ratio will not work if there is no accountability for the employers to report plumber hours to L&I.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Phil Fortunato, Prime Sponsor; Todd Allred, Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors of Washington; Kathy Thaut, Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors of Washington; Brian Harding, Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors of Washington.

OTHER: Tim Herbert, Washington Pipe Trades; Brad Moore, citizen.

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