
**Labor & Workplace Standards
Committee**

HB 1526

Brief Description: Concerning state electrical inspectors' salaries.

Sponsors: Representatives Fosse, Maycumber, Ramel, Berry, Cortes, Bronoske, Peterson, Slatter, Ormsby, Doglio, Macri, Reed and Riccelli.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires salaries of state electrical inspectors to be at least the statewide average of the prevailing rate of wage, excluding usual benefits and overtime, for journey level electricians, or a salary determined by the Director, together with travel expenses, whichever amount is higher.
- Requires that state electrical inspector wage rates be adjusted when prevailing wage rates are adjusted.

Hearing Date: 1/31/23

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

Electrical Inspections.

Except for a few exemptions, a person doing installation, alteration, or maintenance of any electrical system or equipment must first purchase an electrical work permit. When the work is complete, the person must request an electrical inspection within three working days after completing the work or within one working day after any part of the installation has been energized. A person may be subject to civil penalties for failing to obtain required permits or inspections.

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

The Department of Labor and Industries (Department) administers the electrical requirements. Several cities issue their own permits and conduct their own inspections within their local city limits. The Department issues permits and conducts inspections throughout the state, except for within the cities that have their own inspection programs.

The Department's electrical inspectors must have certain minimum training and experience, such as a minimum of four years of experience as a journeyman electrician in the electrical construction trade installing and maintaining electrical wiring and equipment, or a combination of a certain number of years of electrical training in a college of electrical engineering and a certain number of years of continuous practical electrical experience in installation work.

The salaries and expenses of state inspectors are paid entirely out of the electrical license fund. Fees associated with electrical work include electrical plan review fees, permit fees, and inspection fees.

Prevailing Wage Rates.

State law requires that prevailing wages be paid to laborers, workers, and mechanics employed in all public works and public building service maintenance contracts. The prevailing rate of wage is the hourly wage, usual benefits, and overtime paid to the majority of workers in the same trade or occupation in the largest city in the county where the work is performed. The Department's industrial statistician establishes prevailing wage rates based on collective bargaining agreements for a trade or occupation. For a trade or occupation with more than one agreement in a county, the Department will adopt the higher rate. For trades and occupations for which there are no collective bargaining agreements in a county, the Department will conduct wage surveys. The Department adjusts prevailing wage rates twice a year.

Summary of Bill:

State electrical inspectors must be paid at least the statewide average of the prevailing rate of wage, excluding usual benefits and overtime, in the applicable scope of work for journey level electricians, or a salary determined by the Director of the Department, together with travel expenses, whichever amount is higher. Wage rates must be adjusted at the same time as prevailing wage rates.

When determining the statewide average, the Department must use as the denominator the number of wage rates across all counties in the same trade or occupation, rather than the wage rate for each individual county.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 25, 2023.

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

passed.