

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 2396

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*As Passed House  
February 17, 1992*

**Title:** An act relating to electrical contractors.

**Brief Description:** Revising provisions regulating electrical contractors.

**Sponsor(s):** By House Committee on Commerce & Labor  
(originally sponsored by Representatives Scott, R. King,  
Heavey, G. Cole, Wilson and Orr).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Commerce & Labor, February 7, 1992, DPS;  
Passed House, February 17, 1992, 98-0.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
COMMERCE & LABOR**

**Majority Report:** *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 11 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; G. Cole, Vice Chair; Fuhrman, Ranking Minority Member; Lisk, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Franklin; Jones; R. King; O'Brien; Prentice; Vance; and Wilson.

**Staff:** Chris Cordes (786-7117).

**Background:** Persons who engage in the business of installing or maintaining electrical wires or related electrical equipment are required to be licensed by the Department of Labor and Industries. The licensing law does not specifically prohibit an unlicensed electrical contractor from advertising or submitting bids for electrical work, or prohibit a licensed contractor from transferring a license to another contractor. Construction contractors other than electrical contractors are not permitted to: (1) advertise, offer to work, submit a bid, or perform work as a contractor if the contractor is unregistered; or (2) transfer a valid registration to an unregistered contractor or allow an unregistered contractor to work under a registration issued to another contractor.

The civil penalty for violating the electrical licensing requirements is a minimum penalty of \$50 and a maximum penalty of \$10,000.

**Summary of Bill:** It is unlawful for an electrical contractor to transfer an electrical contractor license to an unlicensed contractor or to allow a contractor to perform work with a license issued to another electrical contractor.

Electrical contractors must include their license number in advertising and on contracts, correspondence, and other documents used to solicit business from customers. Signs on motor vehicles and on premises signs are not advertising. A falsified license number may not be used in solicitations or for identification.

The minimum penalty for violations of the electrical contractor licensing provisions is increased from \$50 to \$200.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested February 1, 1992.

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

**Testimony For:** Construction contractors may not advertise for work unless they are registered and the registration number appears in the ad. These requirements should also be applied to electrical contractors. It gives the Department of Labor and Industries another enforcement tool to protect the public from unsafe contractors.

**Testimony Against:** The amount of the penalty increase is too high. If utilities are going to be given an exemption, it should only apply to work performed on their own equipment and facilities.

**Witnesses:** Doug Bohlke, Electrical Contractors (in support of concept, with concerns); Joe Brewer, Department of Labor and Industries (in favor of original bill); John Morrison, Independent Electrical Contractors (in favor); and Gary Smith, Independent Business Association (in support of concept, with concerns).