

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2203

As Reported by House Committee On:

Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to modifying electrical permitting and inspection requirements applicable to work that requires minimal electrical circuit modifications and has limited exposure hazards.

Brief Description: Concerning electrical work that requires minimal electrical circuit modifications and has limited exposure hazards.

Sponsors: Representative Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 3/5/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Finds that some electrical work requires minimal electrical circuit modifications and has limited exposure hazards.
- Provides that random inspections or exemptions from such requirements may be appropriate for such work.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Hudgins, Kenney and McCoy.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Condotta, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Crouse and Holmquist.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

Background:

State law requires property owners and electrical contractors to purchase electrical work permits for all electrical installations or alterations, including remodeling and maintenance work. By rule the following electrical work is exempt from permitting and inspection

requirements:

- Like-in-kind replacements of circuit breakers or fuses, lamps, snap switches, receptacle outlets or heating elements, lighting fixture ballasts, contactors, relays, timers, motor starters, and small motors; and
- Travel trailers.

The Department of Labor and Industries, or the applicable city or town, must inspect such installations.

State law also requires persons who engage in the business of installing or maintaining certain wires or equipment to have either a general electrical contractor license or an appropriate specialty electrical contractor license. Similarly, persons who perform such work must be certified as journey level electricians or appropriate specialty electricians.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature finds that some electrical work requires minimal electrical circuit modifications and has limited exposure hazards. Random inspections or exemptions from such requirements may be appropriate for such work. Changes to current law should further the state's compelling public interest in protecting public safety.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Department of Labor and Industries and other stakeholders have done a lot of hard work since ESB 6630 was passed last year. There are some remaining issues such as random inspections for certain installations, and exemptions for certain work that is not hazardous. The key is maintaining the integrity of the electrical regulatory system, and ensuring public safety. This "title only" bill works without endangering public safety. It is strictly limited to permitting and inspection issues.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Patrick Woods and Ron Fuller, Department of Labor and Industries; and Richard King, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.