

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1831

As Reported by House Committee On:
Labor & Workplace Standards

Title: An act relating to installation, maintenance, and related certification requirements for electric vehicle support equipment.

Brief Description: Concerning installation, maintenance, and related certification requirements for electric vehicle support equipment.

Sponsors: Representatives Bronoske, Berry, Macri and Ramel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workplace Standards: 1/18/22, 2/2/22 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires certification under an electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure training program for certain public works on EV supply equipment.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKPLACE STANDARDS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Berry, Vice Chair; Bronoske and Ortiz-Self.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Hoff, Ranking Minority Member; Mosbrucker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Harris.

Staff: Lily Smith (786-7175).

Background:

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 regulatory scheme for electricians consists of licensure for electrical contractors and certification for electricians, both administered by the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I). Anyone who works in the electrical construction trade must be certified as a journey level or specialty electrician. There are several specialty electrician certifications available, with limited scopes of work. After a specified amount of work experience and passing the relevant exam, either journey level or specialty electricians may become a certified master electrician.

Public works are all work, construction, alteration, repair, or improvement, other than ordinary maintenance, executed at the cost of the state or a municipality.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Certain installation, maintenance, and replacement work on electric vehicle (EV) supply equipment done as a public work is exempted from the scope of work permitted for master, journey level, or specialty electricians. This work may only be done with at least one electrician present that is certified under an EV infrastructure training program to be specified by L&I in rule. Where installation of the EV supply equipment includes a charging port intended to supply 25 kilowatts or more, at least 25 percent of the electricians present must be certified under the training program.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill:

- applies the EV infrastructure training program certification requirements only to public works;
- specifically includes maintenance and replacement work in the scope of work covered by the EV infrastructure training program certification requirements; and
- applies existing exemptions available under other electrical licensing and certification requirements to the EV infrastructure training program certification requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Appropriate training and expertise is necessary to avoid complications and

ensure safety in this work. There are big changes happening very quickly in this industry, and the training required by the bill would be one tool to help workers meet these new demands. Proper training will ensure that this new technology is adopted smoothly and promote a smooth rollout of EVs. There are not just concerns about the installation of EV supply equipment, but also how the equipment will interact with a building's existing electrical load. This equipment often constitutes the largest electrical load in older buildings, but the right training can prevent the issues that might be caused by overloading. The training required by the bill would promote worker and building safety, as well as environmental benefits. This training would be available online, providing necessary flexibility for workers and contractors.

(Opposed) There would be adverse impacts on EV deployment and its workforce if this new training is required right when EV charging industry needs to scale up. The bill would be unprecedented in its regulation of private interactions with public EV charging. There is no oversight of the contemplated required training or of the entity that develops it, and this proprietary training was not developed in consultation with appropriate stakeholders and experts. The bill would essentially grant a monopoly for the provision of training to a private, out-of-state company. The infrastructure does not exist to produce the new certifications that would be required, and the pool of companies that could do this work would be limited. The presence ratio requirements in the bill would be very costly. Many different trades participate in EV charging installation, technicians are already certified, and the majority of issues that arise are nonelectrical. There is no evidence that safety is currently lacking in this area.

(Other) As drafted, this bill would restrict the current ability of property owners to do this work on their own property, including when the state does installations on state property. Permits and inspections would still be required for work by property owners if this restriction was removed. Replacement work should also be included in the scope of work covered. Rulemaking would be required to implement additional training requirements for certified electricians.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Dan Bronoske, prime sponsor; Matthew Hepner, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Ryan Bradt, Puget Sound Electrical Joint Apprentice and Training Committee; and Kelly Hall.

(Opposed) Dylan Jaff, Electric Vehicle Charging Association; Kameale Terry, ChargerHelp!; Cesar Diaz, ChargePoint; and Jeff Gombosky, Tesla.

(Other) Tammy Fellin, Department of Labor and Industries.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.