

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5952

As Passed House:

March 1, 2024

Title: An act relating to aligning deputy inspector credentials with national standards.

Brief Description: Aligning deputy inspector credentials with national standards.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler, Keiser and Dozier; by request of Department of Labor & Industries.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workplace Standards: 2/20/24, 2/21/24 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/1/24, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies the minimum qualifications for deputy boiler and pressure vessel inspectors appointed by the Department of Labor and Industries.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKPLACE STANDARDS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Berry, Chair; Fosse, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, Doglio, Ormsby, Ortiz-Self, Rude and Ybarra.

Staff: Kelly Leonard (786-7147).

Background:

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors.

The State Board of Boiler Rules adopts safety rules on boilers and unfired pressure vessels,

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and the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) administers those regulations by performing safety inspections and issuing operating permits. State law requires a permit before installing, reinstalling, or moving any boiler or unfired pressure vessel.

L&I must employ a chief inspector and deputy inspectors for purposes of conducting inspections, issuing permits, and enforcing the state laws and rules on boilers and unfired pressure vessels. A deputy inspector must have, at the time of appointment, at least five years of practical experience in construction, maintenance, repair, or operation of high pressure boilers and unfired pressure vessels as a mechanical engineer, steam engineer, boilermaker, or boiler inspector. Deputy inspectors must also pass the state boiler examination. The chief inspector also commissions special inspectors who are employed to inspect boilers or unfired pressure vessels by insurance companies and companies that operate boilers and unfired pressure vessels.

National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors.

The National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors (NBBI) consists of the chief boiler inspectors in most states, provinces in Canada, and major cities in the United States. The NBBI commissions boiler and pressure equipment inspectors, provides online and classroom training to inspectors, and publishes the National Board Inspection Code. To be an NBBI-commissioned inspector, a candidate must:

- have a high school education;
- be employed as an inspector by a jurisdictional authority, an owner-user inspection organization, a nonmember enforcement agency, a federal inspection agency, or the national board;
- pass the national board examination; and
- have a minimum of five credit points through education and experience.

Education credits are assigned for technical training or curricula associated with boilers and pressure vessels and for associate's or bachelor's degrees in engineering, technology, science, and mathematics. Experience credits are assigned for each year's experience associated with boilers and pressure vessels.

Summary of Bill:

The qualifications for a deputy boiler and pressure vessel inspector are modified by removing the requirement to have at least five years of specified practical experience. Instead, a deputy boiler inspector must meet, at the time of appointment, the qualification requirements for a commission set forth by the NBBI.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) L&I employs the chief boiler inspector and an additional 11 deputy boiler inspectors. These employees conduct inspections and also review inspections conducted by third party private inspectors. L&I is anticipating that some current employees will be retiring soon, and there will be a pressing need to hire new deputy inspectors. The bill would align the state's qualification requirements with the national standard, rather than having a separate standard. This will assist with the hiring process while maintaining the same high quality of work.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Tammy Fellin, Department of Labor and Industries.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.