

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 6089

As Passed Senate, February 6, 2024

Title: An act relating to eliminating certain minimum requirement equivalencies for electrical inspectors.

Brief Description: Eliminating certain minimum requirement equivalencies for electrical inspectors.

Sponsors: Senators King, Keiser and Mullet; by request of Department of Labor & Industries.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Commerce: 1/18/24, 1/22/24 [DP].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 2/6/24, 49-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Removes, for the purposes of the minimum requirements for electrical inspectors, a provision allowing an electrical inspector to have two years of electrical training in a college of electrical engineering and four years of practical electrical experience in installation work, or four years of electrical training in a college and two years of practical electrical experience.
- Requires the Department of Labor and Industries and the Association of Washington Cities to work with cities that issue their own electrical permits and perform their own inspections to identify appropriate pathways to qualify as an electrical inspector.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Conway, Vice Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Braun, Hansen, MacEwen, Schoesler and Stanford.

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.

Staff: Jarrett Sacks (786-7448)

Background: With some exceptions, 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 business days after completing the work or within one business 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.

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

Electrical inspectors must meet certain minimum training and experience requirements. An electrical inspector must have:

- four years of experience as a journeyman electrician in the electrical construction trade installing and maintaining electrical wiring and equipment;
- two years of electrical training in a college of electrical engineering of recognized standing and four years continuous practical electrical experience installation work;
- four years of electrical training in a college of electrical engineering of recognized standing and two years continuous practical electrical experience installation work;
- four years of experience as a journeyman electrician performing the duties of an electrical inspector employed by L&I or a city or town with an approved inspection program; or
- for inspections for work performed in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code, certification as an outside journeyman lineworker with four years of experience or four years experience as a certified outside journeyman lineworker performing the duties of an electrical inspector employed by an electrical utility.

Summary of Engrossed Bill: The provision allowing electrical inspectors to have two years of electrical training in a college of electrical engineering and four years of practical electrical experience in installation work, or four years of electrical training in a college and two years of practical experience, is removed. The term journeyman electrician is changed to journey level electrician.

L&I and the Association of Washington Cities must work with cities that issue their own electrical permits and perform their own electrical inspections to identify appropriate pathways to qualify as an electrical inspector. L&I must submit a report to the Legislature with its findings and recommendations by December 15, 2024.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The bill removes two methods of becoming an electrical inspector that are seldom used and may not meet the standards of what we want for electrical inspectors. The bill only applies to electrical inspectors. Electrical inspectors need a broad range of experience and necessary education to ensure public safety.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Curtis King, Prime Sponsor; Tammy Fellin, Department of Labor & Industries.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.