

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 1391
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, electrician jobs are expected to grow by over seven percent by 2031. The federal government projects in Texas alone will see a staggering 26.9 percent growth in the industry by 2030. Electrical work is a growing field, but the number of people entering the field is decreasing. Much of the shortage is due to current workers retiring combined with the intense regulations that are required to enter the electrical industry. In Texas, one of the reasons for the shortage is that the electricians code and state regulations make it extremely difficult for an individual to enter the trade or pursue a career in the electrical industry. H.B. 1391 seeks to address the shortage by removing barriers and creating opportunity for high school or community college students to receive a residential wireman license after taking the required classes, practical components, and passing the licensing examination.

H.B. 1391 amends current law relating to the requirements to obtain a residential wireman license.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation in SECTION 2 (Section 1305.1575, Occupations Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 1305.157, Occupations Code, as follows:

Sec. 1305.157. RESIDENTIAL WIREMAN. Requires an applicant for a license as a residential wireman to:

(1) either:

(A) creates this paragraph from existing text; or

(B) successfully complete a career and technology education program described by Section 1305.1575; and

(2) makes no changes to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter D, Chapter 1305, Occupations Code, by adding Section 1305.1575, as follows:

Sec. 1305.1575. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR RESIDENTIAL WIREMAN LICENSE; INSTRUCTORS. (a) Defines "career and technology education program" and "institution of higher education."

(b) Authorizes a person who successfully completes a sequence of courses in the electrical trade that are offered through a career and technology education program to apply for and take an examination for a license as a residential wireman, regardless of whether the person has completed the number of hours of on-the-job training required by Section 1305.157(1).

(c) Requires the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (TCLR) by rule to establish standards for the essential knowledge and skills of a career and technology education program described by Subsection (b), subject to the approval of the State Board of Education if the courses are to be offered in a high school. Requires that the rules:

(1) require the program to consist of an appropriate number of hours of classroom instruction and a practical component; and

(2) provide for crediting appropriate on-the-job training toward meeting the requirements of the practical component.

(d) Provides that a student of any age enrolled in a career and technology education program is eligible to take the sequence of courses described by Subsection (b) without being licensed under Chapter 1305 (Electricians). Provides that this subsection does not authorize a person to perform electrical work without the appropriate license outside of a program described by this section.

(e) Prohibits a person from providing instruction in a program described by this section unless the person is licensed as a master electrician, journeyman electrician, or residential wireman.

(f) Prohibits a career and technology education program offered under this section by an institution of higher education from being more stringent than a program offered by a public high school.

(g) Prohibits hours spent completing a program described by this section from being credited toward any on-the-job training required to apply for a license under this chapter.

SECTION 3. Amends the heading to Section 1305.167, Occupations Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 1305.167. LICENSE RENEWAL; FEE EXEMPTION.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 1305.167, Occupations Code, by adding Subsection (d), as follows:

(d) Provides that a license holder who provides instruction in a career and technology education program described by Section 1305.1575 is not required to pay a fee to renew the license.

SECTION 5. Requires TCLR, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to adopt rules necessary to implement the changes in law made by this Act to Chapter 1305, Occupations Code.

SECTION 6. Requires TCLR, in developing the initial standards for the career and technology education program under Section 1305.1575(c), Occupations Code, as added by this Act, to consult with the Texas State Technical College and relevant interest groups in the electrical industry.

SECTION 7. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.