By: Richardson H.B. No. 552

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners, including the licensing of a plumbing service technician.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 1301.002, Occupations Code, is amended by amending Subdivision (6) and adding Subdivision (9-b) to read as follows:

(6) "Plumber's apprentice" means a person other than a master plumber, journeyman plumber, service technician, or tradesman plumber-limited license holder who, as the person's principal occupation, learns about and assists in the installation of plumbing, has fulfilled the requirements of and is registered by the board, and works under the supervision of a responsible master plumber and the direct supervision of a licensed plumber.

(9-b) "Service technician" means a person licensed under this chapter who:

(A) has completed training and education as required by board rule;

(B) has completed at least 2,000 hours working under the direct supervision of a journeyman or master plumber as a plumber's apprentice;

(C) has passed the required examination;

(D) repairs and replaces plumbing, not involving gas appliances, in one-family or two-family dwellings; and

(E) has fulfilled any other requirements imposed by board rule.

SECTION 2. Section 1301.158, Occupations Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1301.158. [~~PER DIEM.~~] REIMBURSEMENT. (a) A board member may not receive a fixed salary for service on the board.

(b) [~~A board member is entitled to receive a per diem as set by the General Appropriations Act for each day the member engages in the business of the board.~~

[~~(c) A board member may not receive reimbursement for travel expenses, including expenses for meals and lodging, other than transportation expenses.~~] A board member is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary [~~transportation~~] expenses incurred in performing functions as a board member, subject to any applicable limitation on reimbursement [~~as~~] provided by the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 3. Subchapter C, Chapter 1301, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Section 1301.160 to read as follows:

Sec. 1301.160. IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY. The board members, executive director, and employees of the board are not liable for any action taken or omission made or suffered by them in good faith in the performance of any duty in connection with any program or system administered by the board.

SECTION 4. Section 1301.202(b), Occupations Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) A plumbing examiner shall:

(1) examine the fitness and qualifications of a person

applying to the board for a license as a master plumber, journeyman plumber, service technician, tradesman plumber-limited license holder, or plumbing inspector; and

(2) promptly certify the result of the examination to the board.

SECTION 5. The heading to Section 1301.259, Occupations Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1301.259. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATION.

SECTION 6. Subchapter E, Chapter 1301, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Sections 1301.2595, 1301.264, and 1301.265 to read as follows:

Sec. 1301.2595. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION. (a) In this section, "institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003, Education Code.

(b) The board may enter into a memorandum of understanding with an institution of higher education to:

(1) support workforce development;

(2) improve services to students; and

(3) coordinate student support services.

(c) A memorandum of understanding under this section must:

(1) by interagency agreement allow for the sharing of resources, including office space and equipment for education, outreach, and testing opportunities; and

(2) be approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Sec. 1301.264. GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS. The board may solicit and accept a gift, grant, donation, or another item of value from any source to pay for any activity under this chapter.

Sec. 1301.265. AUTHORITY TO DELEGATE POWER REGARDING CERTAIN ORDERS. The board may delegate to the executive director the authority of the board to approve an agreed order, default order, or similar order related to the disposition of a contested case.

SECTION 7. Section 1301.352, Occupations Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1301.352. EXAMINATION REQUIRED. The board shall issue a license or endorsement as a master plumber, journeyman plumber, plumbing inspector, tradesman plumber-limited license holder, medical gas piping installation endorsement holder, water supply protection specialist, service technician, or multipurpose residential fire protection sprinkler specialist to a person who demonstrates the fitness, competence, and qualifications to receive the license or endorsement by passing a uniform, reasonable examination.

SECTION 8. Subchapter G, Chapter 1301, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Section 1301.3545 to read as follows:

Sec. 1301.3545. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE TECHNICIAN LICENSE. The board by rule shall adopt eligibility requirements for a person to apply for and take the examination for a license as a service technician.

SECTION 9. As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners shall adopt

rules necessary to implement the changes in law made by this Act to Chapter 1301, Occupations Code.

SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2027.