

April 8, 2022

Electrical/Apprenticeship programs

Report to the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council regarding Electrical Subcommittee's work on SSB 6126 and next steps.

May 2022

Dear Chairman Kommers,

Please consider this submittal the report from the Electrical Subcommittee regarding its work on SSB 6126, and the next steps the group will take.

As you may be aware, SB 5599, concerning journey level electrician certifications of competency, failed to pass the state Legislature. This bill was meant as a technical fix to 2018s SSB 6126. This latter bill focused on requiring completion of an apprenticeship program to receive a journey level certificate of competency. It set a July 1, 2023 deadline to be in an apprenticeship to sit for the exam. Successful passage certifies a worker as a general, journey level electrician – often referred to as an EL01.

The committee is generally disappointed with the outcome for SB 5599. SB 5599 was framed to safeguard the most vulnerable populations in our industry trainees and apprentices and one of the casualties of the bill not successfully passing means currently the only path to examination is graduation of a Washington State approved apprenticeship program. There are no other paths.

The technical fixes would – in the committee's opinion – have ensured greater access to active military and veterans to gain credit for hours of experience during their service; created accommodations to ensure apprenticeship programs would accept training hours of workers; and provided for experienced electricians to sit for the exam if they met specific requirements.

### **Next steps**

The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) will continue to provide technical support to the committee regarding any further legislative submittal. L&I is investigating several issues brought up during testimony on the bill. This includes specific definitions in law as it relates to qualifying for the exam. Also, discussions about whether hours can already be accepted without any changes in law.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and Construction Industry Training Council (CITC), co-leaders of the subcommittee, are taking different paths regarding their next steps.

The IBEW is currently assessing options moving forward. CITC has made significant investments to prepare for a likely influx of trainees into apprenticeship.

We thank the more than two dozen members of the Electrical Subcommittee for their months of work on this effort. If you have any questions, please feel free and contact us,

Tracy Prezeau, IBEW Education Department

Halene Sigmund, president, Construction Industry Training Council