

SUBJECT: City requirements for master plumbers

COMMITTEE: Licensing and Administrative Procedures — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Wilson, Kubiak, Dear, Goolsby, D. Jones, Pickett, Torres, Yarbrough

0 nays

1 absent — Brimer

WITNESSES: For — Edmund E. Hollub III, Modern Plumbing Inc.; Don Schelfhout, Clear Lake Water Authority

Against — None

On — Stanley J. Briers, State Board of Plumbing Examiners

BACKGROUND: Master plumbers are plumbers who can operate their own businesses and have met the requirements of the Texas Board of Plumbing Examiners. Many cities require master plumbers to secure a bond as a condition of getting a permit to do work for the city. These bonds are known as permit bonds.

DIGEST: HB 1353 would require cities to accept a certificate of insurance from a master plumber in lieu of a permit bond. The certificate of insurance would have to be written by a company licensed to do business in the state, provide for commercial general liability insurance and provide coverage of at least \$300,000 for all claims arising in a year. A city could require permit bonds if the master plumber did not have insurance.

The bill would apply only to permits issued on or after September 1, 1995, the effective date of the bill.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 1353 would eliminate needless duplication. Master plumbers with general liability insurance should not also be required by a city to secure a permit bond. General liability insurance provides more protection to a city than permit bonds. Relieving master plumbers with general obligation

insurance of the requirement of securing a permit bond would save plumbers unnecessary time and expense while more than adequately protecting cities from the costs of plumbers' errors.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition

NOTES:

The Senate companion, SB 559 by Patterson, was considered by the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee on March 22 and left pending.