

- SUBJECT:** Licensing and regulation of a journeyman industrial electrician
- COMMITTEE:** Licensing and Administrative Procedures — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** *After recommitted:*
5 ayes — Kuempel, Guillen, Goldman, Hernandez, S. Thompson

0 nays

4 absent — Frullo, Geren, Herrero, Paddie
- WITNESSES:** *March 20 public hearing:*
For — Jon Fisher, Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas; Michael Gremillion, ISC Constructors LLC, Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas

Against — Thornton Medley, United Steelworkers District Council 13-1;

On — Renea Beasley, Independent Electrical Contractors of Texas; Brian Francis, Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Sacha Jacobson)
- BACKGROUND:** Occupations Code, ch. 1305 establishes the Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act, which regulates electricians. Sec. 1305.003(a)(14) exempts from the chapter electrical work performed at a business that operates a chemical plant, petrochemical plant, refinery, natural gas plant, natural gas treating plant, pipeline, or oil and gas exploration and production operation by a person who works solely for and is employed by that business.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1698 would require an applicant for a license as a journeyman industrial electrician to have at least 8,000 hours of on-the-job training as a licensed electrical apprentice under the supervision of a master electrician and would require the applicant to pass a journeyman industrial electrician examination administered under the Texas Electrical Safety

and Licensing Act.

The bill would define a “journeyman industrial electrician” as a person who engages in electrical work exclusively at a business that operates a chemical plant, petrochemical plant, refinery, natural gas plant, natural gas treating plant, pipeline, or oil and gas exploration and production operation. Only activities performed at the locations listed in the bill could be included in the required examination for a journeyman industrial electrician license.

The bill would require journeyman industrial electricians to complete the four hours of annual continuing education required of other electricians for license renewal.

The bill would transfer responsibility for licensing electricians, including journeymen industrial electricians, from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation to the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (TCLR), and would require TCLR to establish rules to implement the bill's changes by September 1, 2018.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 1698 would remove a regulatory burden by providing a more relevant and efficient licensing alternative for electrical apprentices who work exclusively in industrial settings. Journeyman licensing currently is targeted toward commercial and residential knowledge. If an electrical apprentice chooses to become licensed as a journeyman, the apprentice must become proficient in areas that may not be relevant for work in an industrial setting. The bill would provide journeyman licensing based on training and testing relevant to the industrial work an individual may plan to do. A journeyman industrial electrician would then be restricted to working in an industrial setting under the license.

The bill would not add a new licensing requirement. Electrical apprentices working in the industrial field would not be required to obtain this license. Instead, the bill would offer another, more appropriate path for

electricians to gain the journeyman license status that reflected their expertise in the field.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

CSHB 1698 could add a regulatory burden for electricians who work in industrial settings and currently are exempt from licensing. While the licensing would not be mandatory, it could signal a shift toward a more burdensome industry standard. It is not necessary to create a new license for industrial electricians who may already be certified and respected within their field and have been doing this work for many years.

NOTES:

CSHB 1698 differs from the bill as filed in that the committee substitute would:

- require the journeyman industrial electrician to pass an examination administered under the Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act;
- require that the examination be based on subjects relevant to that industry;
- extend the date by which TCLR would adopt licensing rules from January 1, 2018, to September 1, 2018; and
- not require an applicant to complete a certification program.