

SUBJECT: Relating to the requirements to obtain a residential wireman license

COMMITTEE: Licensing & Administrative Procedures — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 7 ayes — K. King, Goldman, Harless, T. King, Patterson, Schaefer, Shaheen

3 nays — Walle, Hernandez, Herrero

1 present not voting — S. Thompson

WITNESSES: For — Thomas Monaco, IEC of Texas; Jorge Borrego, Texas Public Policy Foundation (*Registered, but did not testify*: Mark Matheny, IEC. Of Texas / TDLR Advisory Board; Renea Beasley, Independent Electrical Contractors of Texas; David Mintz, Texas Apartment Association; J.D. Hale, Texas Association of Builders; Jacob Cottingham, Texas Association of Community Colleges; Mike Meroney, Texas Association of Manufacturers)

Against — Ryan Pollock Joshua Balzer, IBEW Local 520 (*Registered, but did not testify*: Joe Hernandez, Ben Brenneman, IBEW Local 520; Leonard Aguilar, Texas AFL-CIO; Thomas Kennedy, Texas state building trades)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Julie Davis, Doug Jennings, Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation; Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: Under Occupations Code sec. 1305.157, an applicant for a residential wireman license must have at least 4,000 hours of on-the-job training under the supervision of a master electrician or residential wireman and pass a residential wireman examination.

DIGEST: CSHB 1391 would qualify an applicant for a residential wireman license if the applicant successfully completed a certain career and technology

education program. A "career and technology education (CTE) program" would mean a CTE program under the Education Code or a program determined by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to be similar and offered by an institution of higher education or a private school. A person who successfully completed a sequence of courses in the electrical trade that were offered through a CTE program could apply for and take an examination for a residential wireman license, regardless of whether the person had completed the required number of hours of on-the-job training.

The Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (TCLR) would establish standards for the essential knowledge and skills of the CTE program, subject to the approval of the State Board of Education if the courses were to be offered in high school. The rules would require the program to consist of an appropriate number of hours of classroom instruction and a practical component and provide for crediting appropriate on-the-job training toward meeting the requirements of the practical component. In developing the initial standards for the CTE program, TCLR would have to consult the Texas State Technical College and relevant interest groups in the electrical industry.

A student of any age enrolled in the CTE program would be eligible to take the sequence of courses without being licensed as a residential wireman. This would not authorize a person to perform electrical work outside of a program without the appropriate license.

A person could not provide instruction in this CTE program unless the person was licensed as a master electrician, journeyman electrician, or residential wireman. A license holder who provided instruction would not be required to pay a fee to renew the license.

A CTE program offered by an institution of higher education could not be more stringent than a program offered by a public high school.

Hours spent completing a CTE program could not be credited toward any on-the-job training required to apply for a residential wireman license.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 1391 would address the widening gap in the electrician workforce by removing barriers to entry and expanding opportunities for young people to attain residential wireman licenses. Between a growing population in need of housing and increasingly extreme weather in Texas, the electrical industry is crucial for the success of the state. However, the industry struggles to recruit a skilled workforce and is seeing a generation of electricians retire.

The bill would ensure a high standard of education by requiring a practical component in the classroom, which would be regulated by TCLR. Also TCLR would have the authority to impose on-the-job training requirements.

**CRITICS
SAY:**

CSHB 1391 would allow students to obtain residential wireman licenses without necessarily completing on-the-job training, which is an important component of electrician training and could reduce public safety.