

**PRESENTATION OF THE  
BOARD OF ELECTRICIANS AND PLUMBERS**

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2008

Tuesday, February 26, 2008  
9:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 1248, S.D. 1, RELATING TO  
ELECTRICAL LICENSING.**

TO THE HONORABLE RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, CHAIR,  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Norman Ahu, Chair of the Board of Electricians & Plumbers ("Board"). The Board thanks you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to S.B. No. 1248, S.D. 1.

This bill proposes to increase licensing requirements by adding an apprenticeship and educational requirement to the existing licensing requirements for the maintenance electrician, all journey worker level and supervising electrician classifications.

On the matter of increasing licensing requirements, the Board would like to bring to the Committee's attention a 2005 comparative study done by the Office of the Auditor whereby Hawaii's licensing requirements for professions and vocations were compared against the licensing requirements in other states. Licensing of electricians (and plumbers) was included in this study. In this study, the Auditor concluded that "Hawaii's journeyman electrician requirements are one of the most stringent among states that license journeyman electricians."

Given that, and that this bill proposes to further increase requirements, the Board believes licensing may become overly stringent.

While the Board appreciates the merits of this bill, it has concerns that the cost, accessibility, and availability of such additional apprenticeship and educational programs will negatively impact small businesses, future applicants, and the general public wherein there may be a shortage of licensed electricians.

For the Committee's information, the Board is currently in the process of fact finding to understand various legislative proposals, all of which increase licensing requirements, and has requested that parties bring forth information for the Board's consideration. While no consensus has been reached on any changes to the licensing requirements, the Board is willing to further discuss these matters with proponents of the bill. However, until concerns are fully addressed and satisfactorily resolved, the Board must stand on the decision made at the February 20, 2008, board meeting, to unanimously oppose this bill.

There is one more matter that the Board would like to stipulate and that is if any legislative proposal is developed, it must contain a provision that the bill (or Act) is not intended to, nor shall it affect the scope of work of plumbers and electricians licensed under Chapter 448E and the rules thereunder.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to S.B. No. 1248, S.D. 1.



# HAWAII ELECTRICIANS TRAINING FUND

*Joint Apprenticeship Committee • Joint Training Committee • Joint Safety Committee*

1935 HAU STREET, ROOM 301 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-5003 • PHONE (808) 847-0629 • FAX (808) 843-8818

## **Senate Sergeant-At-Arms Office**

For Hearing on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. Conference Room 229  
Senate Committee On Commerce, Consumer Protection, And Affordable Housing

**TO:** Chair Kokubun, Vice-Chair Ige, Members of the Senate Committee On Commerce,  
Consumer Protection, And Affordable Housing

**RE: SUPPORT OF SB 1248, SD 1, RELATING TO ELECTRICAL LICENSING**

My name is Tracy Hayashi, Apprenticeship Coordinator for the Hawaii Electricians Training Fund, testifying in support of **SB 1248**.

Our Inside Wireperson Program (Electrician Apprenticeship) consists of 5-years of school (800.00 hours) plus 10,000.00 hours of on-the-job work experience. We monitor and work with our signatory electrical contractors to rotate our apprentices in the different categories (work processes) of the electrical field by following a guide of recommended work processes hours so our apprentices are well-rounded and qualified to do any electrical installations. Our curriculum is from the National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (NJATC) used nationwide by all International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee (JATC) programs. Upon completion of the 5-year program, the apprentice receives a certificate of completion recognized nationwide in any jurisdiction of the IBEW.

Our Electrical Union (L.U. 1186 IBEW) and Signatory Contractors assigned us the task to train and monitor new members/employees brought into our industry as journeyworkers through organizing a company or signing the referral books for employment as journeyworkers. These individuals are given an aptitude exam by the Local Union to see if they meet the basic proficiency skills of an electrician. Individuals not meeting the basic skills are referred to our office for enrollment into training classes/programs to up-grade their skills. Many of these individuals have no electrical theory or trade school background and lack the basic understanding of the electrical theory and the National Electrical Code (NEC). Furthermore, they have more than 5-years of work experience in the field and some were even the responsible person on the job with previous employers and performed sub-standard work in violation of the NEC.

In comparison, we have journeyworkers who completed and obtained their Associate of Science Degree in the Electrical Maintenance and Technology (EMIT) Program from the University of Hawaii System. Journeyworkers completing this 2-year program have a better understanding of the electrical theory and tend to have an easier time with the curriculum of our program and work assignments with our signatory contractors.

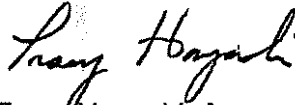
Hawaii is one of a growing list of thirty states requiring journeyworker electricians to take and pass an electrical certification examination to legally perform electrical work within their state. Some states also require related instructional hours as well as on-the-job experience as a prerequisite for journeyworkers to obtain their state electrical license. Others states will approve

**RE: SUPPORT OF SB 1248, SD1, RELATING TO ELECTRICAL LICENSING**  
**HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 26, 2008**  
**PAGE -2-**

credit work hours with the completion of a trade school, apprenticeship program or other related instructions. They see the value in having some kind of theory or related instruction hours.

Based on my duties and responsibilities as Apprenticeship Coordinator, I can attest the NJATC/IBEW 5-year apprenticeship program of 800.00 instructional hours and 10,000.00 work hours far exceeds other electrical training programs. I strongly support SB 1248 for the inclusion of required curriculum along with on-the-job experience/training. It is important to have some kind of schooling background on basic electrical theory and a working knowledge of the NEC. SB 1248 will create a minimum requirement for schooling and will help to insure the safety of both the general public and the workers and prevent unsafe electrical conditions/hazards of sub-standard installation due to lack of knowledge.

Respectfully submitted,



Tracy Hayashi, Apprenticeship Coordinator  
Hawaii Electricians Training Fund



## HAWAII ELECTRICIANS TRAINING FUND

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### Senate Sergeant-At-Arms Office

For Hearing on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. Conference Room 229 Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Affordable Housing

**DATE:** February 25, 2008

**TO:** Chair Kokubun, Vice-Chair Ige, Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, And Affordable Housing

**RE: SUPPORT OF SB 1248, SD 1, RELATING TO ELECTRICAL LICENSING**

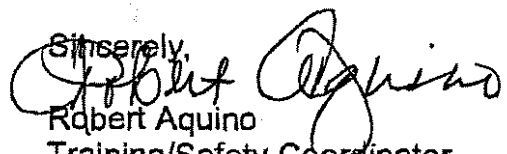
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My name is Robert Aquino, Training/Safety Coordinator for the Hawaii Electricians Training Fund, testifying in support of SB 1248.

SB 1248, SD1, I believe will provide the component that is lacking from the current requirement for the various electricians license. Our Wireperson Apprenticeship Program, as well as, other state approve apprenticeship programs, is required to supplement On-the-Job training with related instructional curriculum as referred to in the Administrative Rules, Title 12 Department of Labor Industrial Relations, Chapter 30.

When a person passes the State of Hawaii's electricians test, that person qualifies for their electrician's license. Since the test is based on the National Electrical Code (NEC), one would consider that person to be a qualified electrician. What is not revealed is that person's educational background on electronic or electrical theory. Attaining knowledge of the NEC is part of what an electrician should know. The NEC is a standard of how electrical systems, equipment and related materials shall be installed or implemented. The NEC is not a guide book of how to become an electrician.

One of my duties is to develop a class for our members who have field experience but no formal electrical theory training. These members express the need for such a class. This revelation provides proof that field experience alone does not provide adequate training in the electrical industry. Our program prepares to elevate these members to a higher level of learning in both electrical principles and electrical safety. I hope that this committee will agree and support SB 1248, SD 1.

Sincerely,  
  
Robert Aquino  
Training/Safety Coordinator  
Hawaii Electricians Training Fund



# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

LOCAL UNION NO. 1186 • Affiliated with AFL-CIO

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## TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB1248 SD1, RELATING TO ELECTRICAL LICENSING

TO: SENATE SGT.-AT-ARMS OFFICE (FAX 586-6659)  
For Hearing on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at 9:00 a.m., in Room 229  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Affordable Housing

RE: SB1248 SD1

Chair Kokubun, Vice Chair Ige, and Committee members,

My name is **Gerald H. Yuh**, I am the Business Manager / Financial Secretary of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186 representing over 3,500 members of the electrical, telecommunication, Oceanic Cable and civil service employees at Pearl Harbor Shipyard, Kaneohe Marine Base and Hickam. IBEW local 1186 also represents over 140 signatory electrical contractors that perform over 80% of electrical work in Hawaii.

As the author of S.B. 1248 I strongly support this bill. As a licensed electrician with foreman caliber experience, I have worked on many of the state's largest projects. As the principal officer of the IBEW L.U. 1186 I have witnessed the sub-standard ability of individuals that do not have formal training. Currently, the only requirement to qualify to take the electrician's journeyman license is field experience. Very few individuals who have not attended a structured apprenticeship program where required curriculum is mandated have the proficiency to work for our signatory contractors. Many have informed us that purchasing a sample test through the General Contracting Agency at a cost of around \$400.00 is the only way they could pass the test. This, however, does not assist them in performing in the real world and in fact compromises safety and quality.

Due to the nature of electrical work and the possibility of catastrophic failure which could result in injury or death as a result of substandard quality of installation, I strongly feel that the minimum requirement of obtaining the electrical journeyman license should be elevated to include with the current standard of 10,000 hrs of field experience and completion of an apprenticeship program, of which there are three (IBEW, HEW and ABC) or complete the Electrical Installation and Maintenance Technology (EIMT) curriculum at the Community College. This allows a variety of accessible programs for anyone interested in a career in the electrical industry.

To address some of the concerns of the Electricians & Plumbers Board, we propose changing HD2 by requiring educational requirements with an approved five-year apprenticeship program AND 10,000 hours experience ONLY for the Journey worker electrician classification; and deleting the educational requirements for the other classifications from the current HD2 Bill.

Sincerely,

Gerald H. Yuh  
Business Manager / Financial Secretary  
International Brotherhood of  
Electrical Workers, Local Union 1186