



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 2, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.

by

John Morton

Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawai'i

HB 2921 RELATING TO LICENSING

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima, and Members of the Committee:

The community colleges are prepared to provide the education and training necessary to meet the licensing requirements contained in this bill. I would like to request, however, that the language in the bill be changed by replacing Honolulu Community College with a University of Hawai'i community college offering an appropriate program of study. While Honolulu Community College offers an extensive set of programs to prepare individuals for employment in the construction trades, we also have colleges on Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island who have programs that can meet the proposed requirements of the bill.



HAWAII ELECTRICIANS TRAINING FUND

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TESTIMONY SUPPORTING HB2921, RELATING TO LICENSING

**TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
(VIA FAX 843-8818)**

For Hearing on Tuesday, February 2, 2010, at 2:00 P.M., in Conference Room 309

RE: STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB2921

Honorable Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima, and Higher Education Committee members,

My name is David Lovelace. I am a Training Coordinator for the Hawaii Electricians Training Fund. We are a non-profit organization that provides substantial training for all our beneficiaries of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186 and, thru contract, others requiring electrical education for the safety and well-being of the industry. Our training involves electrical theory, practical applications, and electrical and construction safety as presented through apprenticeship programs and skilled upgrade training for journeymen. We believe in and follow the definition stated in the Department of Labor 29 CFR Part 29 that a:

“Journeyworker means a worker who has attained a level of skill, abilities and competencies recognized within an industry as having mastered the skills and competencies required for the occupation. (Use of the term may also refer to a mentor, technician, specialist or other skilled worker who has documented sufficient skills and knowledge of an occupation, either through formal apprenticeship or through practical on-the-job experience and formal training.”

We believe that in order to obtain “a level of skill, abilities and competencies recognized within an industry” for the electrical field an apprentice or trainee must possess a thorough understanding of the theory of electricity and the dangers presented by misapplied assumed knowledge.

The State of Hawaii has recognized the need to qualify specific tradespersons in their abilities to perform and direct work in a safe and workmanlike manner thereby:

“HRS §448E-9 Unlicensed activity. (a) No person shall act or assume to act as a journey worker electrician, journey worker specialty electrician, supervising electrician, supervising specialty electrician, journey worker plumber, master plumber, maintenance electrician, journey worker industrial electrician, or supervising industrial electrician, or advertise or hold the person's self out as an electrician or plumber, without a license previously obtained in compliance with this chapter and the rules of the board;...”

Records of test results for the license process have shown that the failing rate has been quite high and many have chosen to pay a third party company to “teach” the test so they might pass. We



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believe this has diminished the license process and the need for the full understanding of the theory of electricity and its components to fulfill "a level of skill, abilities and competencies recognized within an industry". We also feel that the continuation of this process has been extended to the apprentice or trainee level as the state requires only that:

HRS §448E-9 b) An apprentice or trainee learning the trade of a person licensed under this chapter shall not be required to have a license if the apprentice or trainee acts under the supervision of a person appropriately licensed under this chapter.

As the journeyworker is only required to complete a specified amount of work hours in the attainment of a State of Hawaii license, only the attained knowledge through that process is all the state could expect to pass on to an apprentice or trainee. If the state required an academic knowledge base, we feel that the licensed individual would extend that knowledge to the apprentice or trainee.

We also feel that the division of the electrical licenses should be reflected in the applicable scope of the performance. We feel a reduction in requirements in the specific classifications better reflects the needed expertise.

We would also extend the need for an amendment to this bill to address the timeline for completion of the academic portion for an applicant. We feel the academic portion only should not be required until the year 2013, but that the reduction in the hours needed for the qualification for the specific licenses be addressed immediately.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to testify in strong support for HB2921.

Thank you,

David Lovelace
Hawaii Electricians Training Fund
Training Coordinator

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

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HIGHER EDUCATION

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2010

Tuesday, February 2, 2010
2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2921, RELATING TO LICENSING.

TO THE HONORABLE JERRY L. CHANG, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Norman Ahu, Chair and Public Member of the Board of Electricians and Plumbers ("Board"). The Board has not been able to meet as a whole to discuss House Bill No. 2921, but will at its next scheduled meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2010.

While not a formal position of the Board, an informal poll of its members indicates that the majority oppose the inclusion of an educational component to the licensing requirements because members feel this proposal is premature given the current status of discussions between the Board, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the Honolulu Community College in the establishment of an academic program on electrical theory. Currently, there exists no academic electrical program that would meet the requirements of this bill except the accredited Electrical Installation and Maintenance Technology program which is an associate degree. Having only one program in Hawaii offered at only two of Hawaii's Community Colleges severely restricts the ability of potential applicants to meet licensure requirements which may result in a shortage of licensed electricians. The implementation date of July 1, 2010 is also very problematic.

Finally, a majority of the Board members polled support the reduction of licensure requirements to qualify for a journey worker industrial electrician, a journey worker specialty

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electrician, a supervising industrial electrician, and a supervising specialty electrician classification. Thus, adding an academic component to the licensing requirements for these license types would be opposed.

The Board would be happy to report to the Committee Chair after the Board's meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2010 regarding its formal position on this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.