

Honolulu, Hawaii
, 2022

MAR 03

RE: H.B. No. 1597
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred H.B. No. 1597 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to extend:

- (1) The sunset date of Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, as amended by Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, which provides a limited exemption to the licensing requirements for certain individuals in situations when an electric utility must retain qualified individuals to work with high voltage (six hundred volts or higher) who are not licensed in the State but are otherwise deemed qualified by the electric utility; and
- (2) The reporting requirements of Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, which requires the Board of Electricians and Plumbers to submit annual reports to the Legislature related to high voltage electrical work.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1260; and Building Industry Association of Hawaii. Your Committee received testimony



in opposition to this measure from the Board of Electricians and Plumbers, Contractors License Board, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186.

Your Committee finds that there continues to be debate about whether there is a shortage of electricians, splicers, and linemen in the State who are experienced and qualified to work with high voltage (six hundred volts or higher) and who can perform certain complex maintenance and repair work affecting an electric utility, particularly an electric utility's transmission lines.

Your Committee also finds that high voltage electric utility workers are in high demand throughout the country and in-state electric utilities have had difficulties retaining these workers, many of whom leave for jobs in the continental United States. There are therefore times when it may be necessary for an electric utility to contract and retain qualified personnel from other jurisdictions in the United States to perform high voltage work. To address this ongoing situation, this measure extends the limited exemption to the licensing requirements for certain individuals qualified to perform high voltage utility work.

It is the Committee's intention to expressly limit the scope and applicability of the exemption established by Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Specifying that the exemption only applies to workers performing electric transmission and distribution line construction and maintenance and substation work for a public utility;
- (2) Extending the sunset date of the limited extension under Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, and the associated reporting requirements under Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, until 2028, rather than 2033;
- (3) Changing the effective date to January 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.



As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1597, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1597, H.D. 1, and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce,



AARON LING JOHANSON, Chair



