

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16, 2024

RE: H.B. No. 2523
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred H.B. No. 2523 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTRIC UTILITY LINEMAN,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a pathway for the licensure as a journey worker electric utility lineman in anticipation of the repeal of the statutory exemption from licensure set to occur on June 30, 2027.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union No. 1260; Plumbers and Fitters UA Local 675; Operating Engineers Local Union No. 3; and Hawaiian Electric. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Public Utilities Commission; Board of Electricians and Plumbers; Contractors License Board; and Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative.

Your Committee finds that the increased need for electrical utility infrastructure improvements, hardening, expansion, upgrades, repair, maintenance work, and a qualified workforce to perform such work in the State, necessitated the contracting out of work previously performed by employees of electric utilities. However, such contracted work fell outside the scope of the



statutory exemption provided to utility employees from the electrician licensing requirements.

Your Committee further finds that to allow electric utilities to have the workforce necessary to address these existing challenges, Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013 (Act 65), was enacted to provide a limited exception from the electrician licensing requirements for certain contractors retained by electric utilities who perform electric utility work. The limited exception provided by Act 65 was to be repealed on June 30, 2018, but was subsequently extended twice until June 30, 2027.

Your Committee additionally finds that since the enactment of Act 65, electric utility lineman apprenticeship programs have been established in the State and approved by the State to develop a local workforce of trained and qualified electric utility linemen. Recognizing that there is a system in place to locally develop a trained and qualified workforce, the limited exemption provided by Act 65 may be allowed to expire. This measure therefore establishes a pathway for licensure as a journey worker electric utility lineman upon such expiration.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Deleting language that amended when electrical and plumbing contractors are required to visibly display their professional license;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the 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. 2523, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2523, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



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



MARK M. NAKASHIMA, Chair



