

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR MATTHEW POULIOT

Sponsor of LD 126

“An Act To Allow a Journeyman Electrician To Supervise Three Helper Electricians”

Public Hearing: February 25, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business. I am Senator Matt Pouliot and I represent Senate District 15, which includes the towns of Augusta, China, Oakland, Sidney and Vassalboro. I am here to present LD 126 “An Act to Allow a Journeyman Electrician To Supervise Three Helper Electricians”

The idea for this bill came during a project that I was doing in downtown Augusta. I saw there were only two men stringing wire, so I asked the owner of the electrical company doing the work why that was the case. He said under current law that a journeyman was allowed to supervise only one helper if they are not enrolled in some type of learning program. I asked him if he thought this should be changed and he said yes, so I brought the bill forward.

Since turning the bill into the revisor’s office I have had many conversations, which lead me to the amendment that you should have received. It first restores the section that was taken out about supervision for helpers who are enrolled or completed an education program. It was never my intention to take this section out. The amendment also extends the ability to supervise three helper electricians to master electricians and limited electricians.

We have many projects in Maine that are delayed because of our workforce shortage. We also have a lack of folks who are going into the trades. If we can expand the number of individuals who can work with certified electricians, it can help fill these voids and possibly get individuals interested in this trade in a safe manner. I believe it is the right thing to do.

Also in talking with others since putting the bill in, maybe going to three helpers is too big of a jump and we only go to two helpers or do a combination of two helpers with one being in a training program and one not. I am open to others' thoughts and ideas on this, but I really believe expanding the number of helpers available will help ensure that more Mainers have an employment opportunity.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have

Committee: IDEA
Drafter: RO
File Name:
LR (item)#:
New Title?: Yes
Add Emergency?: No
Date: 2/8/2021

LD 126
Proposed Committee Amendment
offered by Sen. Pouliot

Amend the title to read: An Act to Allow a ~~Journeyman Electrician~~ Licensed Electricians to Supervise Three Helper Electricians

Amend the bill by striking everything after the enacting clause and before the summary and inserting in its place the following:

Sec. 1. 32 M.R.S.A. § 1202-A, sub-§ 2 ¶ A is amended to read:

A. A journeyman electrician may make electrical installations while employed by a supervising master electrician, limited electrician or electrical company. A person licensed under this subsection may supervise:

- (1) Two helper electricians who are enrolled in, or have completed, a program of study consisting of 576 hours of education as approved by the board or from an accredited institution;
- (2) Two apprentice electricians; or
- (3) ~~One~~ Three helper electrician electricians.

Sec. 2. 32 M.R.S.A. § 1202-A, sub-§ 4 ¶ A is amended to read:

A. A master electrician may make electrical installations without limitation. A master electrician is responsible for verifying the current licensure of all of that master electrician's employees, if licensure is applicable, prior to and during employment. Master electricians are responsible for any electrical installation they perform and for the electrical installations of individuals they supervise at the time of the electrical installations.

A master electrician may supervise 2 helper electricians who are enrolled in, or have completed, a program of study consisting of 576 hours of education as approved by the board or from an accredited institution; 2 apprentice electricians; or ~~one~~ three helper

~~electrician~~ electricians. Any helper electrician or apprentice electrician must be employed by a master electrician and be under the master electrician's supervision. A master electrician may supervise an unlimited number of licensed journeyman electricians, journeyman-in-training electricians or limited electricians.

Sec. 3. 32 M.R.S.A. § 1202-A, sub-§ 5 ¶ A is amended to read:

A. A limited electrician may only make electrical installations authorized by the specific limited license category. A limited electrician is responsible for verifying the current licensure of all employees, if licensure is applicable, prior to and during employment. Limited electricians are responsible for any electrical installation work they perform and for work of individuals they supervise at the time of electrical installation.

A limited electrician may supervise 2 helper electricians who are enrolled in, or have completed, a program of study consisting of 576 hours of education as approved by the board or from an accredited institution; 2 apprentice electricians; or ~~one~~ three helper ~~electrician~~ electricians. A limited electrician may supervise helper electricians or apprentice electricians only in the performance of electrical installations authorized by the limited electrician's specific limited license category.

SUMMARY

This amendment extends the ability to supervise three helper electricians to master electricians and limited electricians in addition to journeyman electricians. It also restores the distinction for the purpose of supervision by a journeyman between helper electricians and helper electricians who are enrolled in or have completed a certain education program.