

Comments to .01005 Amended SB 2184

PRESENTED BY JAMES SCHMIDT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NORTH DAKOTA STATE ELECTRICAL BOARD

Mr. Chairman Wobbema and Members of the Work Force Development Committee:

I'm James Schmidt, executive director for the North Dakota State Electrical Board. Our particular Board already has in its chapter of the code (NDCC Chap. 43-09) the substantive items addressed in the .01005 amended version of SB 2184. The Board deems it unnecessary, as applied to the Electrical Board and wants to remain exempt.

The board:

1. Already regulates in the least restrictive manner appropriate to the electrical industry. Is charged with the practical safeguarding of the residents of North Dakota and of its buildings and building contents from electrical hazards arising from the use or control of electricity for light, heat, power, and control thereof and of the fire detection system.
2. Has developed a mission statement and a code of ethics policy for the board and its employees to abide by.
3. Has a process for reviewing applications for licensure which is done weekly. Annual renewing of licenses is staggered over a 3-month period to avoid an influx of all 9,100 plus licensees and registration renewing at one time. The board has a method of issuing temporary licenses and for military spouses and foreign practitioners who come from a jurisdiction that does not have similar laws and rules to North Dakota.
4. Approves professional education for apprentices in the form of a college degree or related training and has established continuing education requirements for licensed electricians.

5. Consists of five governor-appointed members with five-year staggered terms. The five-year term helps keep the consistency of board actions, the continuity of the board and maintains its institutional knowledge. By century code the board must meet in January of each year and meets regularly bi-monthly thereafter. Minutes are taken for each meeting and posted on our website.
6. NDSEB is a special fund (self-funded) agency that maintains its annual budget and spends its resources on itself and the electrical industry and monitors appropriate reserves and has established wiring certificate and license fee schedules.
7. Last session, the Board asked for and received authority to expend funds on education to encourage young people to enter the electrical trade. This is codified in NDCC § 43-09.15.1.
8. The board has sufficient staff to address its administrative needs.
9. The board currently uses North Dakota Information Technology Department for our phone, computer programming and data needs.
10. Current board members plus staff have and new board members do attend the annual training held by the attorney general's office.
11. Does biannual audits by a private accounting agency and sends the reports to the state auditors office as required. If the state auditor has not charged in the past but if now can start charging, a cap must be placed on the amount they can charge.

Because the issues addressed by SB 2184 are already codified in its own chapter of the code, the Board believes this bill, as applied to the electrical board, is unnecessary and asks to remain exempt as the board presently is. This amendment, while it would not significantly change how the board operates, results in duplication and possible conflict with the board-specific chapter (NDCC 43-09).

We thank the Committee for listening and I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.