

My name is Chad Jones. I'm here today to support with amendments House Bill 1127.

I'm speaking on behalf of my employer Cisco Systems, a global technology company. I'm an Electrical Engineer for Cisco, having worked there nearly 20 years. I participate in and chair committees for the IEEE and help write the National Electrical Code (the NEC) as a principal member of Code Making Panel 3. I am a subject matter expert for limited power systems.

What is great about this bill is that it seeks to professionalize the low voltage industry – Cisco supports that. I applaud that acceptance of this bill would ensure that Maryland continues to be a leader by adopting the latest edition of the NEC within 18 months of issuance to ensure electrical safety for its citizens. The NEC has dictated electrical safety in the US for over 120 years.

But there is one problem with this bill. It would make it such that any electrical work would need to be done by an electrician or someone with nearly as much experience as an electrician. This unintentionally ensnares traditional ICT (also known as IT) work, as today's modern network provides power and data to devices via Power over Ethernet (PoE).

The odds are high that you have PoE gear in this very building. I'm sure the wireless access points are PoE powered, and you may also have IP phones. This law would require an IT consulting firm to possess a low voltage license to simply move an IP phone from one desk to another.

There is a simple fix for this, one that relies on the words in the NEC for guidance; just as the state of Maryland does; and just as master, journeyman, and apprentice electricians do. Follow the NEC guidance that, by definition, Class 2 and Class 3 circuits are safe from fire

initiation and provide acceptable protection from electric shock. Grant an exception from licensure to power-limited Class 2 and Class 3 circuits.

Cisco would support the bill as introduced with the following amendment (V) inserted into existing language in 6-303:

(B) THIS SUBTITLE DOES NOT REQUIRE:

...

(3) A PERSON TO HOLD A LICENSE ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD IF THE PERSON:

...

(V) DESIGNS, INSTALLS, ERECTS, REPAIRS, MAINTAINS, OR ALTERS ANY ELECTRICAL WIRING, FIXTURE, APPLIANCE, APPARATUS, RACEWAY OR CONDUIT THAT IS CLASSIFIED AS CLASS 2 OR CLASS 3 REMOTE-CONTROL, SIGNALING, AND POWER-LIMITED CIRCUITS, AS DEFINED BY THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE