

February 26, 2020

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chairman, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Office Building, 2 West
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Opposition for Senate Bill 994 (Maryland Electricians Act of 2020)

Dear Chairman Davis:

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA), representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, opposes Senate Bill 994 (Maryland Electricians Act of 2020).

This measure invalidates journeyman-level or master-level electrician licenses issued by local jurisdictions, moves the authority to grant these licenses from the counties to the State, and requires an examination for licensure. This measure also establishes continuing education requirements.

These additional requirements are burdensome and unnecessary. Continuing education and examinations are redundant for master electricians, who have already spent a minimum of 7 years in the field. Training courses will take time away from potential working hours, and the cost will be passed on to employers. This will increase the cost of projects, making construction even more time-consuming and expensive.

This measure also establishes a “journeyman electrician license” as a State license, separate from the standard master electrician license. This allows an individual with less experience and knowledge to perform some of the same tasks currently reserved for master electricians, weakening the value of the master electrician license. This could lower wages and disincentivize people looking to enter the field, which would worsen an existing labor shortage in this field.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee Members