

CORY V. MCCRAY
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

Budget and Taxation Committee

Capital Budget Subcommittee
Health and Human Services Subcommittee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes on Senate Bill 994

Bill Title: Maryland Electricians Act of 2020

Hearing Date: February 26, 2020

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Madam Vice Chair Kagan:

I am writing to you today in support of Senate **Bill SB 994** Senator-Maryland Electricians Act of 2020

This bill updates how we license and issue permits for electrical work in the state. Our electric licensing system was written in 1984 and has had little to no updates since inception. As a result we are one of the last jurisdictions in the country to not have a state wide journeyman's or apprentice license for electrical workers. As the law is currently written all technicians who work on low voltage such as phone, data or stereo equipment require a master electrician license. Additionally counties have devised their own licensing systems to make up for lack of action at the state level causing electricians to carry as much as 24 separate licenses to perform routine work.

SB 994 creates a state wide license for Master, Journeyman and Apprentice electricians.

It also creates a license for low voltage integrators.

It strengthens the pathway for entry level tradespeople to work in a safe and compliant manor by having consistent adoption of the National Electric Code (NEC) across all jurisdictions within 18 months of the new codes release date. NEC is normally updated every three years.

It restructures the state board to contain a customer advocate, an inspector and two low voltage integrators.

The bill clearly defines the low voltage cohort as no more than 50 volts nominal and 70 volts for audio equipment. Low voltage integrator will be able to pull permits. They will now have two pathways to receive their license via a registered apprentice program or by working in the field and taking a test.

As an added safety precaution anyone working in commercial fire safety low voltage has to possess NICET II certification and be present on the jobsite while work is performed.

Most importantly this bill preserves the County's ability to charge for a license, enforce the code, stop work on unsafe job sites, fine bad actors, train locally, and issue local licenses as long as they notify the

state. Some jurisdictions already have robust licensing and they can continue doing so once this bill passes. That is why MACO supports this legislation.

Having a state wide passport license will cut down on red tape and allow employees to move up in their careers and pay. It also strengthens our union trade curriculum because now someone in an apprentice program can be issued a license after completing their program as opposed to having to wait until they qualify for a masters license. It puts us on a level playing field establishing reciprocity with neighboring states, especially helpful if a union worker wants to work in another state on a scale job.

This bill does not impact electrical systems that are not connected to the electrical grid. Please see the AG Opinion in the written testimony.

This bill is supported by the Department of Labor and is the result of three years of study working with the following groups: MACO, Local 24, Local 26, CISCO, National Systems Contractors Association, BICSI, IBEW, ELM, MULEC, AT&T, DISH, Comcast, CEDIA, MBA, and various businesses.

We are preparing an amendment to address some technical errors in the language as you will hear from many of the bill advocates that are “supporting with amendment”. We have built consensus with them and will have it available shortly. This issue was studied by the General Assembly on multiple occasions and we feel this work product goes a long way in solving many of the issues identified. Many of the nuanced concerns you will hear about from the folks testifying will ultimately be sorted out by the State Board of Electricians once this bill is passed. In no way do we seek to reconcile every aspect of who does what with this bill. By setting parameters we ensure high quality and safe services for our citizens.

Please vote yes to SB 994.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory V. McCray', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cory V. McCray
State Senator