



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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HB 1262 – Maryland Electricians Act – Revisions House Economic Matters Committee March 9, 2021

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
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Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1262 – Maryland Electricians Act – Revisions. My name is Donna Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and DC, AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

The work of electricians is incredibly important to the operations of businesses and government, as well as the safety and comfort of Marylanders. Indeed, every facet of our lives is affected by the work done by electricians in our State. Ensuring that we are demanding the highest quality training and providing licensure based on solid standards is of paramount importance to the lives and livelihoods of Marylanders, every day.

Electrical work is, by definition, extremely dangerous. The amount of power that electricians deal with on job sites requires the highest levels of safety and mitigation training. Maryland, currently, has an inadequate standard for those who perform electrical work. And the consequences for that can be dire. According to figures from the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), electrical failures and malfunctions were the 2nd leading cause of home fires in the United States from 2012-2016¹. HB 1262 revises the Maryland Electricians Act to strengthen the standards by which an electrician can be licensed to operate in Maryland.

We need higher standards for licensing electricians for the safety and reliability of electricity in Maryland. We should demand a highly-skilled and trained workforce in installing, repairing, and maintaining electrical systems. Our current standards are insufficient and in dire need of updating, and for these reasons, we **urge a favorable report on HB 1262.**

¹ <https://www.esfi.org/>