

House Business Affairs & Labor

04/14/2022 02:15 PM

HB22-1346 Elec Plumber Licensing Apprentice Ratio

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Keith Fouts Against Self	<p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>I have been a licensed master electrician in Colorado since 2006 and I'm writing to oppose changing the apprentice to journeyman electrician ratio.</p> <p>In my early days as an electrician I have worked on commercial projects, then eventually moved on to industrial projects followed by the utility-scale solar projects that I work on now.</p> <p>A good amount of my work is in Colorado, but two years ago I received direct firsthand experience of what it is like to work with a 1:1 ratio. I worked as a project manager on two solar projects in Massachusetts with this ratio. This was quite the nightmare for me as I could not find hardly any local licensed electricians to work with the crew. I had to do my hiring through two different staffing agencies and the quality of workers I had left a lot to be desired. Some were just bored because the work was very repetitious and did not challenge them enough. Others had the attitude of "you can't fire me because I'm licensed" and often stood around chatting instead of working. Other times they hid from the work. It's good when workers are motivated to perform well and improve themselves. On the other hand, it is challenging when I'm forced to keep subpar employees employed just so the proper ratio can be maintained.</p> <p>These are booming times with lots of construction taking place in Colorado and it is already hard enough to find enough licensed electricians in the state to work with the current 3:1 ratio. Making this ratio more stringent will cause delays on projects.</p> <p>In my experience, one journeyman electrician could easily supervise three apprentices on the commercial, industrial, and utility-scale solar projects that I have worked on and this is why I oppose this bill.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Sincerely, Keith Fouts</p>
Jay Posner Against Nunatak Alternative Energy Solutions	Testimony Before the Business Affairs & Labor on HB22-1346: Electrician Plumber Licensing Apprentice Ratio April 14, 2022

	<p>Thank you, Mister Chair and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to submit my testimony today.</p> <p>Please accept this written testimony against HB22-1346 today, as I am working out of mobile phone service for the next week and will be unavailable to speak in person.</p> <p>My name is Jay Posner and I am the owner and CEO of Nunatak Alternative Energy Solutions in Almont, CO. We are the primary solar installer in the Crested Butte area.</p> <p>I am writing today to express my concern regarding HB-22-1346. As a solar installer on the Western slope in the Gunnison Valley, I believe anything requiring more licensed electricians on a job will be a challenge. It is already hard enough for me to find electricians to meet my workload. I have tried for years to bring a Master electrician on staff, but to no avail.</p> <p>Currently, all of us are struggling to find more employees to help with this construction boom.</p> <p>Like everyone else, I am concerned about safety. I understand that is a key driver for this bill. However, it seems to me that this solution is onerous. The supervising Master electrician must answer to the electrical AHJ already. I don't work with any Master electricians who don't already take the safety of their staff and their customers seriously. To my knowledge, there has never been a safety incident in our area due to the 3:1 ratio.</p> <p>From a business standpoint, this will only hurt local businesses. We will be forced to bring in contractors from outside the Valley, which will preclude the local workforce from keeping its revenue locally. This bill will detrimentally slow down the solar jobs that keep my business going, by costing more time and money, thus increasing price.</p> <p>I urge you to vote no on HB22-1346.</p>
--	---

HB22-1346 Electrician Plumber Licensing Apprentice Ratio

Thursday, April 14, 2022

House Business Affairs & Labor 1:30 pm | Room 0112

Written Testimony: Oppose

Thank you, Mister Chair and members of the committee. My name is Matt Gorenc and I am government affairs manager at the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce and the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation.

I submit this testimony on behalf of the Chamber to express our opposition to House Bill 1346.

Our metro area is seeing explosive growth, and many qualified workers are flocking to our state for its world-class amenities. As construction companies look to respond to this massive growth, swathes of new development have sprinkled the Denver Metro area. But despite all this new development, we still do not have enough housing inventory to support demand. Simultaneously, our nation is experiencing soaring inflation not seen in forty years and our economy is recovering from a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic.

All the while, this bill serves to exacerbate the housing crisis, inflation, and supply chain issues. Currently, our plumbers and electricians are well-trained and very capable professionals who serve a vital role and keep our households and businesses running. Modifying the supervisor-to-apprentice ratio is an unneeded burden on the professions and is simply unnecessary to produce qualified plumbing and electrician professionals. Plumbers are facing some of the worst supply chain problems, and this is causing ripple effects throughout our economy, worsening inflation and delaying vital work to bring more housing stock to market. Our area's consumers deserve a plethora of professionals to turn to when they need plumbing and electrical work done.

This bill will create unnecessary training bottlenecks at a time when our economy needs skilled workers to fill record-high job vacancies. There is little research that shows that modifying the supervisor-to-apprentice ratio will produce more qualified professionals, but what we do know is that it will hinder our ability to fill job vacancies, will worsen inflation, and will create more complications for a training regimen which works well in its current iteration. In other words, if it isn't broken, don't try to fix it.

We urge the members of this committee to vote no on this bill.