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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ELECTRIC UTILITY LINEMAN.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that it is critical to  
2 develop a local workforce of properly qualified, trained, and  
3 licensed electric utility linemen, which will protect the health  
4 and safety of the public and utility workers and improve and  
5 maintain Hawaii's electrical infrastructure. Recently, the  
6 tragic events on Maui made this need a top priority.

7           The legislature further finds that Act 183, Session Laws of  
8 Hawaii 1971 (Act 183), established the board of electricians and  
9 plumbers to oversee the licensing policies of the State's  
10 electricians and plumbers and ensure the safety and welfare of  
11 the public. Act 183 also exempted employees of a public utility  
12 who perform electric utility work from these licensing  
13 requirements.

14           Due to a growing need for electrical utility infrastructure  
15 improvements, hardening, expansion, upgrades, repair,  
16 maintenance work, and a qualified workforce to perform such  
17 work, utilities began contracting out work previously performed



1 by employees of utilities. However, the board of electricians  
2 and plumbers has stated that electric utility work contracted  
3 out by a utility and performed by contractors falls outside of  
4 the exemption provided in Act 183.

5 In response, the legislature passed Act 65, Session Laws of  
6 Hawaii 2013 (Act 65), which provided a limited exemption from  
7 electrician licensing requirements for certain contractors  
8 retained by electric utilities who perform electric utility  
9 work. Act 65 recognized the need for experienced and qualified  
10 linemen in the State who can perform certain complex maintenance  
11 and repair work affecting an electric utility and noted the  
12 potential impacts to the health and safety of the State and its  
13 residents. Act 65 included a sunset date of June 30, 2018.  
14 Industry stakeholders testified in 2013 in support of this  
15 sunset date and indicated that, "[l]ocal training to develop a  
16 quality Hawaiian workforce would be the best long-term goal for  
17 securing a safe and reliable electrical grid for our community."

18 The legislature further finds that Act 60, Session Laws of  
19 Hawaii 2018, extended the sunset date of Act 65 for an  
20 additional five years, with the intent to provide the industry  
21 with the time needed to develop a local workforce of trained and



1 qualified linemen to address the growing needs of Hawaii's  
2 electrical utilities.

3       Currently, there are established and state-approved  
4 electric utility lineman apprenticeship programs available, with  
5 others being developed. The National Electrical Safety Code,  
6 adopted by the public utilities commission, is recognized as the  
7 code and standard for training electric utility lineman and  
8 covers the purpose and scope of work performed for the  
9 generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity and  
10 related electric utility facilities, equipment, and  
11 infrastructure from the point of generation to the point of  
12 service.

13       The legislature acknowledges the extreme working conditions  
14 and inherent dangers of work performed by an electrical utility  
15 lineman. Consistent with the Electrical Training Alliance,  
16 which is the recognized industry partner by the International  
17 Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the National Electrical  
18 Contractors Association, the legislature recognizes the  
19 significant and critical differences between an inside wireman  
20 electrician trained and licensed under the purpose and scope of  
21 the National Electrical Code and an electric utility lineman



1 trained under the purpose and scope of the National Electrical  
2 Safety Code.

3 The purpose of this Act is to, beginning January 1, 2027:

4 (1) Establish requirements, including minimum standards  
5 and qualifications, for licensure as a journey worker  
6 electric utility lineman; and

7 (2) Expand the board of electricians and plumbers to  
8 include members engaged in electric utility work.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to ensure the  
10 health and safety of the public and electric utility workers.

11 SECTION 2. Section 448E-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
12 amended by adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted  
13 and to read as follows:

14 ""Journey worker electric utility lineman" means any person  
15 who has been licensed by the board in accordance with the  
16 National Electrical Safety Code as a journey worker electric  
17 utility lineman to perform all electric utility work involving  
18 the installation, maintenance, and operation of energized and  
19 de-energized equipment and appurtenances associated with the  
20 transmission and distribution of electricity from the  
21 electricity's original source to the point of service."



1 SECTION 3. Section 448E-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 **"§448E-2 Board; appointment.** There is established the  
4 board of electricians and plumbers consisting of [~~seven~~] nine  
5 members. Two of the members shall be engaged in the electrical  
6 trade, two of the members shall be engaged in electric utility  
7 work, and two of the members shall be engaged in the plumbing  
8 trade. Three of the members shall be private citizens not  
9 connected with the industry."

10 SECTION 4. Section 448E-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
11 amended to read as follows:

12 **"§448E-4 Powers and duties of board.** In addition to any  
13 other powers and duties authorized by law, the board shall have  
14 all the powers and duties necessary or convenient to carry out  
15 and effectuate this chapter, including but not limited to the  
16 following powers and duties:

- 17 (1) To grant licenses [~~which~~] that shall be renewable for:  
18 (A) Journey worker electricians;  
19 (B) Journey worker electric utility lineman;  
20 [~~B~~] (C) Journey worker specialty electricians;  
21 [~~C~~] (D) Supervising electricians;



- 1           ~~(D)~~    (E)    Supervising specialty electricians;
- 2           ~~(E)~~    (F)    Master plumbers;
- 3           ~~(F)~~    (G)    Journey worker plumbers;
- 4           ~~(G)~~    (H)    Maintenance electricians;
- 5           ~~(H)~~    (I)    Journey worker industrial electricians; and
- 6           ~~(I)~~    (J)    Supervising industrial electricians;

7           (2) To adopt, amend, or repeal rules in accordance with  
8           chapter 91 as it may deem proper to effectuate this  
9           chapter and to ~~insure~~ ensure the safety and welfare  
10           of the general public; provided that the rules may  
11           forbid acts or practices deemed by the board to be  
12           detrimental to the accomplishment of the purpose of  
13           this chapter;

14           (3) To enforce this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to  
15           this chapter and chapter 91, including the denial,  
16           suspension, or revocation of any license; and

17           (4) To examine all applicants and licensees to determine  
18           their qualifications prior to the issuance or renewal  
19           of licenses."

20           SECTION 5. Section 448E-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
21           amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

1           "(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b), an  
2 applicant shall possess the following minimum qualifications:

3           (1) Journey worker electrician: To be eligible for the  
4 journey worker electrician examination, an applicant  
5 shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall  
6 provide satisfactory evidence of experience in  
7 residential or commercial wiring of at least five  
8 years full-time or its equivalent, but not less than  
9 ten thousand hours, in the trade under the supervision  
10 of a journey worker or supervising electrician;

11           (2) Journey worker electric utility lineman: To be  
12 eligible for the journey worker electric utility  
13 lineman examination, an applicant shall be at least  
14 eighteen years of age and shall provide satisfactory  
15 evidence of:

16           (A) Experience in electric utility lineman work  
17 within the purpose and scope of the National  
18 Electrical Safety Code and other codes and  
19 standards adopted pursuant to chapter 269;

20           (B) At least three and a half years full-time or its  
21 equivalent, but no less than seven thousand



1           hours, performing the electric utility lineman  
2           work under the supervision of a journey worker  
3           electric utility lineman; and

4           (C) Satisfactory completion, accepted by a university  
5           of Hawaii community college or its equivalent  
6           offering an appropriate program of study, of four  
7           hundred thirty-two hours of electrical academic  
8           coursework;

9           provided that all individuals actively employed by an  
10           electric utility incorporated in the State as a  
11           journey worker electric utility lineman or individuals  
12           actively performing the work of a journey worker  
13           electric utility lineman in the State for a minimum of  
14           six calendar months before January 1, 2027, shall be  
15           deemed qualified as a journey worker electric utility  
16           lineman for licensing purposes according to this  
17           chapter;

18           [+2+] (3) Journey worker specialty electrician: To be  
19           eligible for the journey worker specialty electrician  
20           examination, an applicant shall be at least eighteen



1 years of age and shall provide satisfactory evidence  
2 of at least five years' experience in the trade;

3 ~~[(3)]~~ (4) Supervising electrician: To be eligible for the  
4 supervising electrician examination, an applicant  
5 shall have been registered with the board as a journey  
6 worker electrician for at least a period of four years  
7 or shall have equivalent experience in the trade;

8 ~~[(4)]~~ (5) Supervising specialty electrician: To be  
9 eligible for the supervising specialty electrician  
10 examination, an applicant shall have been registered  
11 with the board as a journey worker specialty  
12 electrician for at least a period of four years or  
13 shall have equivalent experience in the trade;

14 ~~[(5)]~~ (6) Journey worker plumber: To be eligible for the  
15 journey worker plumber examination, an applicant shall  
16 provide satisfactory evidence of experience of at  
17 least five years' full-time or its equivalent, but not  
18 less than ten thousand hours, as a journey worker's or  
19 master plumber's helper;

20 ~~[(6)]~~ (7) Master plumber: To be eligible for the master  
21 plumber examination, an applicant shall have been



1 registered with the board as a journey worker plumber  
2 for at least two years or shall have equivalent  
3 experience in the trade;

4 [~~(7)~~] (8) Maintenance electrician: To be eligible for the  
5 maintenance electrician examination, an applicant  
6 shall be not less than eighteen years of age and shall  
7 provide satisfactory evidence of at least one year of  
8 experience in performing electrical maintenance work  
9 or two years of schooling in the electrical trade;

10 [~~(8)~~] (9) Journey worker industrial electrician: To be  
11 eligible for the journey worker industrial electrician  
12 examination, an applicant shall be at least eighteen  
13 years of age and shall provide satisfactory evidence  
14 of experience in industrial electrical work of at  
15 least five years full-time or its equivalent, but not  
16 less than ten thousand hours; or

17 [~~(9)~~] (10) Supervising industrial electrician: To be  
18 eligible for the supervising industrial electrician  
19 examination, an applicant shall have been registered  
20 with the board as a journey worker industrial



1           electrician for a period of at least four years or  
2           shall have equivalent experience in the trade."

3           SECTION 6. Section 448E-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
4 amended to read as follows:

5           "**§448E-8 Fees; renewals.** (a) Renewal fees shall be paid  
6 to the board before July 1.

7           (b) Plumbers shall renew the license every three years  
8 effective June 30, 2006, and shall pay all required fees. Prior  
9 to the June 30, 2009, renewal of the license, and prior to every  
10 license renewal thereafter, the applicant shall:

11           (1) Pay all required fees; and

12           (2) Meet the requirements prescribed in section 448E-8.5.

13           (c) Electricians shall renew the license every three years  
14 effective with the July 1, 1996, renewal; provided that prior to  
15 the renewal of the license, the applicant shall:

16           (1) Pay all required fees; and

17           (2) Meet the requirements prescribed in section 448E-8.5.

18           (d) Electric utility linemen shall renew the license every  
19 three years; provided that prior to the renewal of the license,  
20 the applicant shall:

21           (1) Pay all required fees; and



1        (2) Meet the requirements prescribed in section 448E-8.5.

2        [~~d~~] (e) Failure, neglect, or refusal of any licensee to  
3 pay the renewal fee or meet the requirements of section 448E-8.5  
4 before the renewal date shall constitute a forfeiture of the  
5 license. Any license so forfeited may be restored upon written  
6 application within one year from the date of forfeiture, upon  
7 payment of the required renewal fee plus penalty fees, and upon  
8 meeting the requirements in section 448E-8.5."

9        SECTION 7. Section 448E-8.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
10 amended to read as follows:

11        "**§448E-8.5 Continued competency; license renewals.** (a)

12 Prior to each license renewal, all licensed electricians except  
13 maintenance electricians shall:

14        (1) Furnish the board with proof of attendance at an  
15 educational course related to current updates of the  
16 National Electrical Code conducted or approved by the  
17 community colleges; or

18        (2) Successfully complete an examination prescribed by the  
19 board on current updates to the National Electrical  
20 Code. The board shall contract with a professional  
21 testing agency to prepare, administer, and grade the



1 examination. ~~[Fees]~~ A licensee shall pay all fees  
2 related to the examination ~~[shall be paid by the~~  
3 ~~licensee]~~ directly to the professional testing agency.

4 (b) Prior to each license renewal, all licensed electric  
5 utility linemen shall:

6 (1) Furnish the board with proof of attendance at an  
7 educational course related to current updates of the  
8 National Electrical Safety Code and other codes and  
9 standards adopted pursuant to chapter 269 conducted or  
10 approved by the university of Hawaii community  
11 colleges or its equivalent; and

12 (2) Successfully complete an examination prescribed by the  
13 board on current updates to the National Electrical  
14 Safety Code and other codes and standards adopted  
15 pursuant to chapter 269. The board shall contract  
16 with a professional testing agency to prepare,  
17 administer, and grade the examination. A licensee  
18 shall pay all fees related to the examination directly  
19 to the professional testing agency.

20 ~~(b)~~ (c) Prior to each license renewal, all licensed  
21 plumbers shall:



1 (1) Furnish the board with proof of attendance at an  
2 educational course related to current updates of the  
3 Uniform Plumbing Code conducted or approved by the  
4 community colleges; or

5 (2) Successfully complete an examination prescribed by the  
6 board on current updates to the Uniform Plumbing Code.  
7 The board shall contract with a professional testing  
8 agency to prepare, administer, and grade the  
9 examination. A licensee shall pay all fees related to  
10 the examination directly to the professional testing  
11 agency.

12 [~~(e)~~] (d) A licensee who has been issued a new license  
13 within one year of the renewal date shall not be required to  
14 take the course or the examination to renew the licensee's  
15 license."

16 SECTION 8. Section 448E-9, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
17 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

18 "(a) No person shall act or assume to act as a journey  
19 worker electrician, journey worker electric utility lineman,  
20 journey worker specialty electrician, supervising electrician,  
21 supervising specialty electrician, journey worker plumber,



1 master plumber, maintenance electrician, journey worker  
2 industrial electrician, or supervising industrial electrician,  
3 or advertise or hold the person's self out as an electrician,  
4 electric utility lineman, or plumber, without a license  
5 previously obtained in compliance with this chapter and the  
6 rules of the board; provided that any person may perform  
7 emergency plumbing repair work in the person's principal place  
8 of residence when such repairs do not involve or require  
9 rearrangement of valves, pipes, or fixtures; provided further  
10 that no such emergency repairs may be performed on sewer lines,  
11 drains, gas lines, and on fixtures being served with backflow  
12 devices [~~which~~] that include heaters, water closets,  
13 dishwashers, and garbage disposal units.

14 For purposes of this subsection:

15 "Electric utility lineman" means any person who is trained  
16 and performs energized and de-energized electric utility lineman  
17 work as described in this chapter and within the purpose and  
18 scope of the National Electrical Safety Code and other codes and  
19 standards adopted pursuant to chapter 269, including but not  
20 limited to any person who acts as a journey worker electric  
21 utility lineman.



1 "Electrician" means any person who performs electrical work  
2 and includes but is not limited to any person who acts as a  
3 journey worker electrician, journey worker specialty  
4 electrician, supervising electrician, supervising specialty  
5 electrician, maintenance electrician, journey worker industrial  
6 electrician, or supervising industrial electrician.

7 "Plumber" means any person who performs plumbing work and  
8 includes but is not limited to any person who acts as a journey  
9 worker plumber or master plumber."

10 SECTION 9. Section 448E-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
11 amended to read as follows:

12 "**§448E-11 Injunction.** The board may, in addition to any  
13 other remedy available, apply to a circuit court judge for a  
14 temporary restraining order or preliminary or permanent  
15 injunction restraining any person from acting, or assuming to  
16 act, as a journey worker electrician, journey worker electric  
17 utility lineman, journey worker specialty electrician,  
18 supervising electrician, supervising specialty electrician,  
19 maintenance electrician, journey worker industrial electrician,  
20 supervising industrial electrician, journey worker plumber, or  
21 master plumber without a license previously obtained in



1 compliance with this chapter and the rules of the board, and  
2 upon hearing and for cause shown, the judge may grant the  
3 temporary restraining order or preliminary or permanent  
4 injunction."

5 SECTION 10. Act 68, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, is  
6 amended by amending section 6 to read as follows:

7 "SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022[~~+~~  
8 ~~provided that, notwithstanding the repeal and reenactment~~  
9 ~~provision in section 4 of Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013,~~  
10 ~~as amended by section 2 of Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018,~~  
11 ~~and this Act, subsection (c) of section 448E-13, Hawaii Revised~~  
12 ~~Statutes, as added by section 2 of this Act, shall not be~~  
13 ~~repealed when that section is reenacted on June 30, 2027,~~  
14 ~~pursuant to section 4 of Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, as~~  
15 ~~amended by this Act]."~~

16 SECTION 11. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
17 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

18 SECTION 12. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2027;  
19 provided that sections 2 through 9 shall take effect on  
20 January 1, 2027.



**Report Title:**

Journey Worker Electric Utility Lineman; Board of Electricians and Plumbers; Licensing; Requirements

**Description:**

Beginning 1/1/2027, establishes licensing requirements, including minimum standards and qualifications, for licensure as a journey worker electric utility lineman and expands the Board of Electricians and Plumbers to include members engaged in electric utility work. Repeals an existing exception to the impending sunset of the limited exemption from electrician licensing requirements that was originally enacted by Act 65, SLH 2013, and extended pursuant to Act 60, SLH 2018, and Act 68, SLH 2022. Takes effect on 7/1/2027. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

