



House Bill 1368

Electricians – Local Licenses - Repeal

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: March 6, 2017

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1368. The bill attempts to implement some of the conclusions of the 2013 Task Force to Study Licensing and Continuing Education Requirements for Electricians in Maryland, but does so in a piecemeal manner that singles out local licensure. MACo believes it is premature to address just this issue, while broader and more collaborative discussions on electrical licensing reform are still underway.

HB 1368 establishes a statewide licensing framework for master electricians. It also repeals the authority for a local government to issue any electrical licenses. The latter requirement is phased in by 2020. The bill does not address any other recommendations from the task force report.

While all but two counties (Allegany and Garrett) license master electricians, there are five counties (Calvert, Charles, Harford, Montgomery, and Prince George's) that license journeyman electricians. There are also a number of other local licensed classes of electricians including general, limited or restricted, and apprenticeships. As the bill removes all licensing authority for local jurisdictions, journeymen and other local classes of electricians would effectively lose their local ability to perform services. The bill contains no comparable state license system or exemptions for these other classes of electricians. These electricians would now have to meet the more rigorous standards necessary to obtain a statewide master electricians license in order to continue to provide their limited level of services.

Furthermore, local electrical boards are best situated to oversee and discipline electricians working within their jurisdictions. Counties appreciate that the bill retains some ability for local boards to regulate electricians through a registration systems. However, for proper enforcement action it is important for counties to be able to restrict, suspend, or revoke a state license holder's right to perform electrical services in that jurisdiction.

Counties maintain they are in the best position to locally license and regulate electricians and oppose the cherry-picked approach of this bill. MACo remains willing to continue discussions with the sponsor and stakeholders to ensure that changes, if made, are collaborative and comprehensive in nature. For these reasons, MACo urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 1368.