



## House Bill 1407

### *Maryland Electricians Act - Revisions*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: March 14, 2018

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1407. This bill repeals long-standing local authority to license electricians and imposes a new, less comprehensive, statewide system. MACo believes it is premature to address this issue, among others in the bill, while broader discussions on electrical licensing reform are still underway.

HB 1407 is a comprehensive bill that generally establishes a new statewide licensing framework for electricians. It also repeals the authority for a local government to issue any electrical licenses. The latter requirement is phased in by 2021.

The bill attempts to implement certain select conclusions of the 2013 Task Force to Study Licensing and Continuing Education Requirements for Electricians in Maryland, including eliminating local licensure. However, the components in this bill do not represent any broad consensus among the numerous stakeholders in this still-ongoing effort. Absent such a consensus, counties believe this is unwise.

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. These classes would be forced to meet new state standards for journeymen that for some of the other local licensed classes may be more rigorous than necessary 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 system. 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. Accordingly, MACo urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 1407.