

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1387

As Reported by House Committee On:
Labor

Title: An act relating to apprenticeship training for building officials.

Brief Description: Supporting apprenticeship training for building officials.

Sponsors: Representatives Takko, Sells and Moscoso.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor: 2/2/15, 2/9/15, 2/10/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Imposes a \$2 fee on each building permit issued by a county or city.
- Requires that revenue collected from the fee be deposited into the Code Officials Apprenticeship and Training Account and used for expenses related to the Code Official's apprenticeship program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Manweller, Ranking Minority Member; Moeller and Ormsby.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives G. Hunt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCabe.

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

Code Officials Apprenticeship Program.

The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (Council), which is part of the Department of Labor and Industries, establishes apprenticeship program standards, approves apprenticeship training programs, and otherwise governs the programs. Apprenticeship

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programs are sponsored by either joint employer and employee groups, or individual employers, or employer associations.

The Code Officials Apprenticeship Program (Program) was initially approved by the Council in 2009 and is sponsored by the Washington Association of Building Officials.

The State Building Code.

The State Building Code (SBC) provides statewide minimum performance standards and requirements for construction and construction materials. The SBC is comprised of model codes (such as building, residential, fire, and plumbing codes) adopted by reference in statute, as well as rules developed and adopted by the State Building Code Council.

Counties, cities, and towns are required to enforce the SBC, and may amend the codes as it applies within their jurisdictions, so long as the minimum performance standards of the codes are not diminished.

Building Permit Fee.

Building permits for structures are issued by local jurisdictions. The State Building Code Act requires that a fee of \$4.50 be charged on each building permit issued by a county, city, or town. An additional surcharge of \$2 for each residential unit, not including the first unit, is imposed on each building containing more than one residential unit. With limited exceptions, counties, cities, and towns may impose fees different than the building permit fee set forth in statute.

Counties, cities, and towns must collect building permit fees and remit the money collected to the State Treasury on a quarterly basis. The funds are deposited into the Building Code Council Account to be used by the State Building Code Council.

Summary of Bill:

Legislative findings are made regarding the need to train new building officials and to provide continuing training for existing officials.

A \$2 fee is imposed on each building permit issued by a county or city. Counties and cities must remit moneys collected to the State Treasury, to be deposited into the newly created Code Officials Apprenticeship and Training Account.

Moneys must be appropriated to the Department of Enterprise Services for distribution to the sponsor of the Code Officials Apprenticeship Program. The money must be used for:

- expenses related to the establishment and operation of the Program;
 - administrative expenses of the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee for the Program; and
 - expenses related to training for code officials provided by public and private entities.
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Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) When building officials review plans and go out on inspections, they should all have the same standards. About 75 percent of building officials are soon to retire and there needs to be well-trained staff to replace them. The school curriculum for the apprenticeship program is being developed. The training will be available to current staff as well. The main objective of the apprenticeship program is to promote public safety. Building codes are complex and building officials need to have both an understanding of the codes and good judgment. The training helps both large and small jurisdictions.

(With concerns) If the program has been in existence for several years already, it is difficult to understand why funding is sought right now.

(Opposed) This sets an unnecessary precedent to have building permits fund projects. The bill does not have any mechanism to stop the fee collection if there is a decrease in apprenticeship enrollment, and there is no requirement that the sponsor of the program continue to contribute funds. There is no state-wide standard for code officials. Local jurisdictions are not the same across the state and each have their own issues. Counties can raise building permit fees currently, but it is done in a public manner with discussion happening locally.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Takko, prime sponsor; and Jonathan Siu, C. Andrew Higgins, and Mary Kate McGee, Washington Association of Building Officials and City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development.

(With concerns) Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Association.

(Opposed) Jan Himebaugh, Building Industry Association of Washington; and Laura Merrill, Washington State Association of Counties.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.