

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jene Vickrey at 3:30 P.M. on March 9, 2006 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Jim Yonally- excused

Committee staff present:

Mike Heim, Legislative Research Department
Martha Dorsey, Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office
Maureen Stinson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Rep. Flaharty
Andree Sisco
Tom Kersen, City of Wichita
Glen Wiltse, Sedgwick County Code Enforcement
David Woodard, Kansas National Contractors Association, Inc.
Chris Butts
Richard Kretchmar, Independent Electrical Contractors Association
James Davis

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Vickrey opened the hearing on:

SB 497 **Improvement districts; qualification of directors**

Rep. Flaharty testified in support of the bill (Attachment 1). She explained that every other elected office requires residency.

Andree Sisco, resident of Wichita, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 2). She explained that the proposed legislation would require that Directors of Improvement District Boards live or own property within the Improvement District that they seek to represent.

Chairman Vickrey closed the hearing on **SB 497**.

SB 497 **Improvement districts; qualification of directors**

Rep. Lane made a motion for the favorable passage of SB 497 and asked that it be placed on the Consent Calendar. Rep. Faust-Goudeau seconded the motion. Motion carried.

SB 498 **Requiring continuing education for certain contractors licensed by cities and counties**

Tom Kersen, Office of Central Inspection, City of Wichita, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 3). He said the bill is necessary to assure the continued and improved safety of all buildings or structures in which Kansas live, work, play, assemble, or congregate.

Glen Wiltse, Department of Code Enforcement, Sedgwick County, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 4). He said the proposed changes in the bill would provide a necessary requirement of work experience prior to taking an examination and also require continuing education.

David Woodard, Kansas National Contractors Association, Inc., testified in support of the bill (Attachment 5). He said establishing a minimum field experience tenure before electrical examinations may be administered, coupled with continuous education requirements before electrical licensing renewal can be obtained, ensures that individuals working in the electrical construction industry possess all the expertise and

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Governmental Organization and Elections Committee at 3:30 P.M. on March 9, 2006 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

experience to fully understand the intricacies of the electrical construction industry.

Chris Butts, resident of Wichita, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 6). He said that passage of the bill is a step in the right direction to ensure the public that a qualified person would perform electrical installation in our State.

Richard Kretchmar, Independent Electrical Contractors Association, testified in support of the bill (Attachment 7). He said additional requirements will increase the professionalism of the industry and will, in turn, maintain a safe working environment on the job site, and in the homes and businesses of Kansas.

Sen. Mike Petersen submitted written testimony in support of the bill (Attachment 8).

Written testimony in support of the bill was submitted by Jeff Read (Attachment 9).

Written testimony in support of the bill was submitted by James Davis (Attachment 10).

Chairman Vickrey closed the hearing on **SB 498**.

SB 498 **Requiring continuing education for certain contractors licensed by cities and counties**

Rep. Sawyer made a motion to amend SB 498 and to pass the bill favorably out of committee. His suggested amendment is to clarify that the continuing education requirement would apply to all cities grants electricians' licenses, and not just those granting annual licenses. Rep. Lane seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Rep. Sharp made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2006 meeting. Rep. M. Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Vickrey adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 2006.

**House Governmental Organization and Elections
Committee**

Date 3 - 9 - 2006

Name	Representing
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JEANNE Goodvin	City of Wichita
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Tom Kerschen	City of Wichita
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Richard Kretchmar	I E C Wichita
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Glen WILTSE	SEDGWICK COUNTY
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Andree SISCO	Oaklawn Improvement District
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Ange SISCO	W.S.U. Student
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Mary Kretchmar	I E C Wichita
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DAVID WOODARD	NECA, KANSAS Chapter
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Tony Naylor	Wichita Electrical JATC
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CHRIS Butts	IBEW
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STATE OF KANSAS

GERALDINE FLAHARTY

REPRESENTATIVE 98TH DISTRICT
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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER: TOURISM
MEMBER: EDUCATION
ENVIRONMENT
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
JOINT COMMITTEE ON
PENSIONS, INVESTMENTS &
BENEFITS

March 9, 2006

Re: Testimony SB497

Thank you Chairman Vickrey and committee for looking at the Senate version of this issue. You may recall the hearing on HB2810 and passing it favorably. As time grew short, it was not heard on general orders and was stricken from the calendar.

By some historic oversight, a residency or ownership requirement was omitted from the improvement district statutes. Every other elected office requires residency. My constituents in Oaklawn and Sunview Improvement Districts believe this should apply to them.

I ask for your consideration of SB497 to pass favorably.

Thank you.

House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 1

Hello, my name is Andree Simonsen Sisco, I live at 5015 Jade, P.O. Box 161067, Wichita, Kansas, 67216. My telephone number is 316-529-1582.

I would like to thank all of the committee members for letting me speak on Senate bill 497. This is an important issue to me.

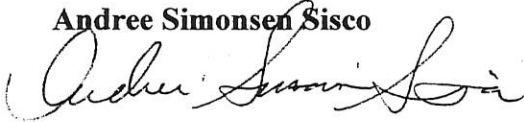
I have served as a board member on the Oaklawn Improvement District board over the last ten years. I think it is very important that we have board members who live within the community, helping that community to grow.

When a person runs for an elected office they must live within the area they are looking at representing. The only place that this is not true is in an Improvement District. A person can just go down and put their name on the ballot. Improvement Districts are mostly small and do not get many outsiders wanting to be on the board. Most boards do not pay, however, there are those exceptions. Oaklawn Improvement District is such an exception, we have enough residents be a city, and we pay our directors. We set property taxes, sewer rates, even pass resolutions to abate nuisances on property to make our area a safer place to live and raise children. That is what makes it important that we, as board members, live within the district. We make important decisions for the Improvement District and its residents.

With the approval of this committee, by passing **Senate Bill 497**, it would **require an Improvement District Board of directors to live or own property within the Improvement District we are representing.**

In closing, I would like to add that I have worked on a board where we all lived within the community to which we served. And I have worked with a board where we had one person not on the board and it just felt like everything we did for the betterment of our community was a fight. I still live within the Oaklawn Improvement District and I would like it to keep improving, making it a better place to raise children and grandchildren. People living within the area know and understand what is important to the area we live in. **Please pass Senate Bill 497 with your approval. Thank you.**

Andree Simonsen Sisco



House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 2



March 9, 2006

The Honorable Representative Jene Vickrey
Governmental Organization & Elections Committee
300 SW 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1504

RE: Senate Bill #498

Dear Representative Jene Vickrey,

I represent the City of Wichita's Office of Central Inspection, which is the building construction plan review and inspection department for the City. Our office is a strong proponent of SB #498. As construction inspectors, we are required to have continuing education in order to maintain our certifications (as is virtually every other building construction trade and profession in the state of Kansas).

Technology is rapidly and constantly changing and with the advances of electronic components it is changing the way wiring is installed. Electronic ballasts on fluorescent lighting and offices with computers have created new challenges and require different wiring methods for maintaining safety. Without continuing education, new safety devices such as arc fault circuit interrupters and installation practices may be overlooked, and new equipment and devices may be inappropriately or unsafely utilized and installed. The latest edition of the National Electrical Code had more than 3,500 proposed changes, and this was during just one three-year code cycle.

Per current state law, anyone passing the required examination is issued a license **that has no expiration date**. Per the law, a license holder is not required to remain knowledgeable or up-to-date with respect to changes in the electrical industry or to minimum code standards, or to even be active in the electrical industry. For example, under current law, the holder of a State-issued electric license could go to work as a metal fabricator in the aerospace industry for 10 years, then leave aerospace employment to re-enter the electrical trade as an electrical contractor. This individual may become an electrical contractor by simply reapplying to our office for issuance of a local electrical certificate, and by applying for a local electrical contractor's license (with submission of required minimum liability insurance). Even though the applicant has not kept current with changes in the industry, especially new products and codes, our office is **required** to issue the local electrical certificate and license - simply because the applicant has passed the State-required test anytime since 1993. For the safety of the public, electricians need continuing education to keep themselves abreast of technology and the national electrical codes.

The second part of SB#498 is to require some apprentice field training before taking the test and becoming a journeyman. The present state statute does not require an individual to have

Office of Central Inspection

City Hall • 7th Floor • 455 N. Main • Wichita, Kansas 67202-1600

House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 3

T 316.268.4460 • F 316.268.4663

any field training. During a recent local contractor license review hearing, the contractor who was under review asked why the City of Wichita was not concerned with safety, because the City was issuing electrical contractor licenses to unqualified or inexperienced people, even to people who had never worked in the trade. Our answer: Due to the current format of the state law, we are required to issue these licenses, even though the issuance does not coincide with our own local testing, certification and licensing minimum requirements. This bill is needed to prevent this from happening.

As building construction inspectors, we pride ourselves on promoting and encouraging safe, quality construction. This bill is necessary to assure the continued and improved safety of all buildings or structures in which Kansans live, work, play, assemble or congregate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Kerschen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Tom Kerschen
Electrical Construction Inspection Supervisor
Office of Central Inspection
Wichita, KS 67202



**DEPARTMENT OF CODE ENFORCEMENT
Sedgwick County, Kansas**

**1144 South Seneca
Wichita, Kansas 67213-4443
Phone: (316) 383-7951
1-800-527-CODE
FAX: (316) 383-7502**

**Glen Wiltse, C.B.O., C.B.I.
Director**

March 9, 2006

Chairman Vickery and members of the House Governmental
Committee,

Sedgwick County Code Enforcement Department is in support of
senate Bill 498. Our Department is in charge of Licensing Electrical
Contractors and providing inspection services for Sedgwick County.
We also have contracts for 10 Cities in the county that we provide the
inspection and licensing services for.

The proposed changes in the SB 498 would provide a necessary
requirement of work experience prior to taking an examination and
also require continuing education. These Electrical Codes typically
will change every three years and also equipment changes so rapidly
that periodic training is necessary.

For all of the above reasons Sedgwick County Code Enforcement is
in support of Senate Bill 498 and asking for your approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glen Wiltse".

Glen Wiltse
Director of Code Enforcement

Sedgwick County

House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 4



*Kansas Chapter
National Electrical Contractors Association, Inc.*

March 9, 2006

**The Honorable Jene Vickrey
Kansas State Senate
State Capitol Building Room 115-S
Topeka, Kansas, 66612-1504**

Re: Endorsement of Senate Bill 498

Dear Jene Vickrey:

On behalf of the Kansas Chapter of National Electrical Contractors Association, I wish to extend our support towards Senate Bill 498. As an organization, representing the Electrical Construction Industry, one of our primary interests is the advancement of safe installation practices in electrical construction. Safe installation practices require highly skilled and educated electricians to perform such tasks. In today's ever changing environment, we feel that it is essential to continually sharpen those skills as technology advances the products, materials, and methods used in electrical construction. Continuous education is imperative to keep abreast with those changes.

In addition to the educational requirements necessary, there must exist a practical understanding of the applications of safe installation practices. Such an understanding is best accomplished by field experience.

A requirement establishing a minimum field experience tenure before electrical examinations may be administered, coupled with continuous education requirements before electrical licensing renewal can be obtained, ensures that individuals working in the electrical construction industry possess all the expertise and experience to fully understand the intricacies of the electrical construction industry.

Safely installed electrical systems benefit all Kansans. Please support Senate Bill 498.

Sincerely,

**David Woodard
Executive Director Kansas NECA**

**House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 5**

Dear Committee Members,

I am here today to support Senate Bill 498. I have been a Journeyman Wireman since 1992, and currently am licensed thru the city of Wichita.

The training I received as an apprentice was based on the National Electrical Code (NEC).

The purpose of the NEC is “ the practical safeguarding of persons and property from hazards arising from the use of electricity”. Over twenty five percent of all fires are caused by electricity.

The NEC defines a qualified person as: “One who has skills and knowledge related to the construction and operation of the electrical equipment and installations and has received safety training on the hazards involved”.

The state of Kansas does not require any education or training of any kind to be recognized as a qualified person or electrician. All you need to do is to be able to look up the answers in the NEC to pass the open book electrical exam. It is possible in this state to pass the exam and become a licensed electrician without any experience what so ever. This also means you can also become an electrical contractor without the proper training.

Senate Bill 498 will be a step in the right direction to ensure the public that a qualified person would perform electrical instillations in our state.



Chris Butts

House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 6

**House of Representatives
Governmental Organization and Elections
Committee Meeting
Rm. 519 South
Thursday, March 9, 2006
Senate Bill 498**

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Senate Bill #498.

My name is Richard Kretchmar. I have been an electrician in the state of Kansas for over 40 years, and am the president and owner of Ray's Electric in Wichita. I am also the current president of the Wichita area chapter of "IEC", the Independent Electrical Contractors association which represents non-union electricians and electrical contracting companies. The members of IEC are unanimously supportive of this bill which will require additional education and field experience to obtain and maintain an electrical license. We believe that these additional requirements will increase the professionalism of our industry and will in turn maintain a safe working environment on the job site, and in the homes and businesses of Kansans.

House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 7



2608 S. E. DRIVE
WICHITA, KANSAS 67216
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STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 242-E
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(785) 296-7355
petersen@senate.state.ks.us

SENATOR MIKE PETERSEN

SB498

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I want to thank you for letting me have the opportunity to appear before you today. SB498 is a bill requiring cities that have licensing requirements to adopt rules and regulations requiring electricians to obtain 12 hrs every two years to renew their license and set requirements for field experience before setting for exams. This is similar to what we passed for the plumbing trades last session with the addition of the residential certificates as it applies to the electrical trades. The language was worked out with the input of inspectors, Independent Electrical Contractors Assn., National Electrical Contractors Assn. and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

In this age of rapidly changing technology, today's electrician needs to be highly skilled and trained in a variety of techniques and specialties to safely provide services to their customers. A recent NCSL brief stated that "Electricians must have the skills and knowledge to design and install electrical current systems. To do so, they must be able to read blueprints and connect wiring to transformers, as well as install conduit, circuits, outlets and breaker panels in homes and businesses. Their work must comply with national, state, and local building and electrical codes." The last day I worked in the electrical trade before coming to session, I dealt with standards from the Electronic Industries Assn., Telecommunications Industries Assn., The National Electrical Code and local building codes.

Today's electrician may work on systems that range from dealing with millivolts and milliamps when retro-fitting existing machinery to be controlled by computer to providing a safe path to ground for current during a lightning strike. They need to know how, what they install for basic delivery of power, interfaces with other systems that they or others are installing, such as life safety systems, wireless systems and computer networks.

Some areas of our state may not deal with all of these issues. Some of our small businesses have motors that even two years ago would have been installed with a starter that might be able to use a programmable frequency drive which can be safer, more efficient and cheaper (if properly installed). Bringing electricians together might generate discussions on how different companies are adapting to changes in the code, technology and wiring methods that could lead to safer and more efficient installations for all of us. Other communities might want to focus their training on Code changes that deal with new methods of installations or safety devices for homes. Technology is changing rapidly. The last change in the National Electric Code had more than 3000 changes from the one previously adopted three years prior. We live in a great and diverse state. That is why this bill leaves the adoption of the rules and regulations to the local city or county. I ask you to vote for this bill and increase the safety of our citizens.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Petersen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Senator Mike Petersen

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing this letter in regards to **Senate Bill No. 498**.

My name is Jeff Read. I have been a licensed electrician since 1979. During my career I have also served as a Safety Director and an electrical apprenticeship instructor.

Electrical fires are the number one cause of fire in the workplace and electrocution is now the fifth leading cause of worker-related deaths in the United States.

But that is only part of the story. According to the latest statistics from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there is an annual average of 111,400 home fires caused by faulty electrical distribution systems taking an average of 860 lives, injuring 3,785 and causing nearly \$1.3 billion in property damage.

Of all the skilled trades, the electrical trade must stress education the most, as it is the trade that has caused the most property damage and deaths.

Being an electrician is a very demanding career, and the technical expertise required to handle the job means that today's electrician must be more educated than ever before. The requirement of continuing education credits for the renewal of electrical licenses is a simple and positive means to ensure that Kansas's electricians are achieving and maintaining that needed expertise and knowledge.

To the best of my knowledge, 24 other states (Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming) have already realized the importance of requiring continuing education credit requirements for the renewal of electrical licenses, and we should too.

I earnestly feel that with the passage of Senate Bill No. 498 you will be making Kansas a safer place to work and live.

Sincerely,



Jeff Read

House Gov. Org. & Elections
Date: 3-9-2006
Attachment # 9

Dear Committee Members,

RE: Senate Bill No. 498

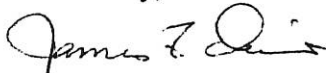
I am writing this letter to urge you to support Senate Bill No. 498. I have worked as an electrician since 1977 and have had to continually update my education in the electrical industry. This is necessary in regards to changing code requirements and technology changes.

It should be noted that 35% of our industry changes due to technology every five years. Every aspect of our lives is touched in some way by the electrical industry. Whether it is by heating, air conditioning, computer systems, voice video, etc. nothing works without electricity. It requires the most skill and education of all of the crafts.

I believe many accidents and fires within the electrical industry would have been prevented if more people were required to educate themselves. This is not an issue that only addresses the electrician but it also helps protect the consumer.

I urge you to pass Senate Bill No. 498

Sincerely,



James F. Davis

House Gov. Org. & Elections

Date: 3-9-2006

Attachment # 10