

SESSION OF 2026

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2588

As Amended by House Committee of the Whole

Brief*

HB 2588, as amended, would create the Electrician Licensing Act and would transfer occupational licensing authority for electricians to the State Fire Marshal (Fire Marshal) from cities and counties effective July 1, 2027.

The bill also would make technical amendments.

Definitions

The bill would define the following terms:

- “Electrician” generally, or “master electrician,” “journeyman electrician,” or “residential electrician” specifically to mean a person qualified to engage in the practice of a master electrician, journeyman electrician or residential electrician, respectively, and licensed by the Fire Marshal to practice such respective profession and perform electrical work;
- “Electrical work,” or “practice as an electrician” to mean providing, offering to provide, or representing oneself as able to provide professional electrician services as a master electrician, journeyman electrician, or residential electrician; and
- “Act,” “board,” “licensee,” and “person” as described in the bill.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

Examinations and Licensing

The bill would establish current standard examinations for electrical contractors, master electricians, journeyman electricians and residential electricians as the standard to determine competency for licensure and authorize a city or county to conduct such examinations.

Before issuance of a license to a licensee, the Fire Marshal would be required to verify the validity of the applicant's schooling and the applicant must provide documented proof of 8,000 hours of field experience directly under an individual holding a journeyman or master's license.

The bill would require all new licenses issued by the Fire Marshal to display distinctive language to indicate the testing agency and examination taken.

The bill would also require the Fire Marshal to adopt rules and regulations to:

- Govern conduct and grade of examinations;
- Prescribe a minimum score for passage;
- Fix a uniform examination fee;
- Require all persons receiving such license to obtain continuing education;
- Define the scope of practice for electrical contractors and master, journeyman, or residential electricians; and
- Encourage and facilitate apprenticeships under the direct supervision of licensed master, journeyman, or residential electricians.

The bill would provide that any person who holds licensure prior to July 1, 2026, will continue to hold the same rights and privileges and will not be required to obtain a new license. Renewal of licensure, on or after July 1, 2027, may require additional education requirements, but would not require reexamination.

Starting on July 1, 2027, these provisions would be administered by the Fire Marshal.

Electrical Licensing Advisory Board

The bill would establish the Electrical Licensing Advisory Board (Board) within the office of the Fire Marshal. The Board would:

- Oversee the administration of the statewide electrician licensing program;
- Advise the Fire Marshal regarding licensing of electricians;
- Make recommendations regarding administrative procedures or statutory changes necessary to the growth of the profession;
- Consult with stakeholders within the profession in executing its duties; and
- Review annually any rules and regulations adopted by the Fire Marshal related to the licensing of electricians.

The Board would consist of six members who must be Kansas residents:

- One appointed by the Governor;
- Two members appointed by the President of the Senate;

- Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House; and
- The Fire Marshal or respective designee as an ex officio member of the Board.

Each member of the Board would serve, without compensation, a term of three years or until a successor is appointed and qualified. Members of the Board would elect one of the incumbent members to serve as chairperson based upon experience and training of the appointee in the profession of electrician. Members who are not state officers or employees and attending Board meetings or authorized subcommittee board meetings would be paid amounts provided in law regarding compensation for members of other boards created by statute.

The bill would require the Board to meet a minimum of four times in a year at a time and place determined by the Fire Marshal and at other times when the Fire Marshal deems necessary.

Liability Coverage

The bill would require, on and after July 1, 2027, electrical contractors to submit proof to the Fire Marshal of a current insurance policy of at least \$1.0 million for injury or death of persons and \$500,000 for property damage with an application for licensure. A licensee must also notify the Fire Marshal of any substantial change in policy of coverage within 10 days prior to the effective date.

Denial, Suspension, and Revocation

The bill outlines cause, upon review and finding by the Fire Marshal, in accordance with the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act and Kansas Judicial Review Act, for which an license may be denied, suspended, revoked, or subject to

civil action if one or more of the following has been committed by a person, applicant, or licensee:

- Willful omission or false statement, as defined in the bill, to a material matter made in the license application or renewal process;
- Fraud, misrepresentation, or bribery in obtaining a license;
- Failure to maintain any requirement or notify the Fire Marshal of any material alteration or change relating to licensing requirements;
- Failure to have immediate personal possession of a valid electrical license while performing electrical work;
- Performing electrical work without the respective required permit;
- Knowingly performing electrical work not in compliance with building, electrical, fire prevention, and other applicable codes established by governing authority;
- Intentionally charging a customer for work not performed or parts not provided;
- Knowingly allowing hazardous conditions to remain resulting in the public unduly exposed to risk of injury;
- Impersonating another licensee or knowingly allowing a non-licensee to use an electrician's license;
- Engaging in conduct intended to deceive or defraud the public;

- Chronic or persistent abuse of alcohol or prescription or non-prescription drugs resulting in work dangerous to clients or the public;
- A physical or mental disability resulting in work dangerous to clients or the public; and
- Revocation of licensure, certification, or registration in another jurisdiction on grounds sufficient to cause an electrical license to be denied, limited, suspended, probated, or revoked in this state.

The bill would permit a license to be suspended or revoked upon a finding by the Fire Marshal that facts and circumstances exist that require a suspension or revocation of the license to protect the health and safety of the public, including but not limited to competency, ability, or fitness of the licensee.

On or after July 1, 2027, the Fire Marshal is authorized to impose a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation.

The bill would prohibit a license from being denied, suspended, revoked, or subject to civil action or a civil penalty imposed until a written order is issued by the Fire Marshal and served to the licensee. The bill would require the written order to state the violation, penalty, and right of the person to request a hearing. The Fire Marshal would be authorized to issue emergency orders, including but not limited to immediate suspension or revocation of a license, as provided by the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act. All fines assessed and collected would be remitted to the State Treasurer and deposited in the State General Fund.

Remedies

Any party aggrieved by an order issued by the Fire Marshal, pursuant to the Act, would be allowed to request, in writing, a hearing within 15 days from the date of service of

the written order. Such hearing would be conducted in accordance with the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act. The filing of a hearing request would not abate or stay the issuance of an emergency order or cease and desist order, unless otherwise stated within the emergency order.

Complaint Monitoring

On and after July 1, 2027, the Fire Marshal would be responsible for receiving and monitoring the disposition of complaints received regarding persons and licensees and would be authorized to conduct investigations of the complaint.

The bill would direct the Fire Marshal to devise simple, standard complaint forms to supply the information necessary to investigate complaints. The bill would require the complainant to produce a written complaint prior to any formal action being taken on the complaint. The bill also would require the receipt of the form to be acknowledged on behalf of the Fire Marshal and the complainant to be advised in writing on the final disposition of the complaint.

The bill would prohibit any complaint, notice, or records relating to the complaint from being disclosed by the Fire Marshal unless ordered to do so by a court of competent jurisdiction. The complaint, notice, or records relating to the complaint could be disclosed to the Board, for the purpose of receiving its feedback on disciplinary action, provided all names and other identifying information are omitted.

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the State Fire Marshal would be authorized to assign a complaint specifically for investigation or take other action warranted under the circumstances.

The bill would provide that nothing in the section would supersede the Fire Marshal's statutory power to issue, suspend, revoke, or renew licenses.

Exemption

The bill would exempt military personnel, who hold an electrician license, called to active duty in a war, emergency, or contingency for more than 120 days from the requirements of renewal, payment of license fees, and continuing education within the period of service or within the six months following the completion of active duty. The Fire Marshal would be authorized to accept electrician training or service completed as a member of the military toward the educational qualifications of license renewal.

Electrician Fee Fund

The bill would establish the Electrician Fee Fund (Fund) within the State Treasury. The Fire Marshal would administer the fund and remit all moneys received from fees, charges, or penalties. All expenditures from the fund would be approved by the Fire Marshal or the Fire Marshal's designee.

County or City Licensure

The bill would prohibit, on or after July 1, 2027, any county or city from issuing any license pursuant to the provisions of the Act. Licenses issued by a city or county prior to July 1, 2027 would become effective statewide.

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development at the request of Representative Willcott.

House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by representatives from Northwind Technical Services and the Association of General Contractors of Kansas who voiced support for the adoption of reciprocity and allowing Kansas to maintain a competitive labor advantage through reciprocation.

Neutral testimony was provided by representatives of the Kansas Board of Technical Professions and the Kansas League of Municipalities. Testimony generally voiced opposition to electricians being licensed by the Board of Technical Professions, given electrician's general status as a trade as opposed to other technical professions. Additional testimony encouraged the committee to add language to prevent the preemption of local municipal regulation.

Opponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organization who voiced general support for the bill absent concerns regarding the requirement of 4,000 hours of on-the-job training and voiced support for adoption of federal 8,000 hours required. Additional testimony was provided by a representative of KDK Engineering, LLC who opposed regulation by the Kansas Board of Technical Professions and voiced support maintaining current industry best practices and separation of functions.

Written only proponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Associated General Contractors.

Written-only neutral testimony was provided by a representative of Johnson County.

Written only opponent testimony was provided by a representative of the City of Russell.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Define “electrician” generally, or “master electrician,” “journeyman electrician,” or “residential electrician” specifically to mean a person qualified to engage in the practice of a master electrician, journeyman electrician, or residential electrician, respectively, and licensed by the State Fire Marshal to practice such respective profession and perform electrical work;
- Define “electrical work,” or “practice as an electrician” to mean providing, offering to provide, or representing oneself as able to provide professional electrician services as a master electrician, journeyman electrician, or residential electrician;
- Change the licensing authority from the State Board of Technical Professions to the Fire Marshal and designate the bill’s provisions as the Electrician Licensing Act;
- Require the Fire Marshal to verify the validity of the applicant’s education;
- Exempt electricians licensed before July 1, 2026, from reexamination and new licensure, but not exempt existing licensees from additional education requirements upon renewal of an existing license;
- Remove an amendment in the bill concerning the statutory definition of technical professions;
- Establish the Board within the office of the Fire Marshal;
- Require electricians to provide proof of a current insurance policy and notify the Fire Marshal of any

substantial change in policy of coverage within 10 days prior to the effective date;

- Outline cause and procedure, upon review and finding, by which a license may be denied, suspended, revoked, or subject to civil action and penalties;
- Require the production of a written order stating the violation, penalty, and right of the person to request a hearing prior to the denial, suspension, revocation, or civil action or penalties against a licensee;
- Exempt military personnel, who hold an electrician license, called to active duty for more than 120 days from the requirements of renewal, payment of license fees, and continuing education within the period of service or within the six month following the completion of active duty;
- Establish the Electrician Fee Fund within the State Treasury and grant the Fire Marshal the administrative, remittance, and spending authority within the fund;
- Prohibit any county or city from issuing an electrician license on or after July 1, 2027; and
- Recognize a license issued pursuant to the Act prior to July 1, 2027, as effective statewide.

House Committee of the Whole

The House Committee of the Whole made technical amendments to the bill.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of Budget on the bill as introduced, the State Board of Technical Professions indicates that the enactment of the bill would increase fee fund expenditures by \$32,500 in FY 2026 for costs associated with database modifications, publication of regulations, and one-time expenditures for new equipment and furnishings. The Board anticipates that the enactment of the bill would increase expenditures by \$198,570 in FY 2027 and \$202,795 in FY 2028 and require 2.00 positions, an Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Assistant. Included in these estimates are salary expenditures of \$169,000 in FY 2027 and \$173,225 in FY 2028 for the two new positions. The agency also estimates expenditures of \$7,200 each year for compensation of the two additional board members, \$17,000 each year for investigation costs, and \$5,370 each year for additional dues, printing, and postage. The Board anticipates the enactment of the bill would increase fee fund revenues by \$224,650 for fees charged for licenses and business certificates in both FY 2027 and FY 2028 with 10.0 percent to the State General Fund by statute. Any fiscal effect associated with enactment of the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2027 Governor's Budget Report*.

The League of Kansas Municipalities indicates that the enactment of the bill would reduce the revenues of some cities for developing and conducting exams for electricians; however, an exact fiscal effect would vary from city to city and is not currently available.

The Kansas Association of Counties indicates that the enactment of the bill would increase expenditures for counties that administer electrician examinations. The Association indicates there would be filing fees, documentation review charges, and training costs as well as expenditures for a verification and enforcement system for state licenses.

Electrician; certification; license; licensure; occupational licensing; military