

Labor and Public Employees Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-662

AN ACT EXTENDING THE VALIDITY OF CERTAIN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TRAINING FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Title: PROJECTS.

Vote Date: 3/25/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/18/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

There are concerns about workers in the construction industry and the amount of training they receive.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

KURT WESTBY, COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

They have concerns about the proposed bill. The DOL is the agency responsible for the health and safety of municipal and state employees and they feel this cost-saving measure may compromise the safety of these workers. Training is necessary to maintain an appropriately healthy and safe workplace. Expanding the training gap by such a significant number of years may result in additional illnesses and injuries in the workplace, resulting in an increased risk to workers. They do not support this bill as drafted.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

ROBERT SAMPSON, STATE SENATOR, SIXTEENTH DISTRICT, ASSISTANT SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

Sen. Sampson's testimony said he proposed this legislation after hearing from several of his constituents who have expressed concerns about the current state requirements regarding the OSHA ten-hour training card validity. This would extend the validity of this training card from five years to ten years to align the state requirements with those of the federal government and reduce costs for state contractors who already meet those federal requirements.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

DON SHUBERT, JOHN BUTTS, CT CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATES, INC.

The issue this bill addresses is not about the necessity of safety training, but its frequency. This bill requires 10-hour training issued to workers every 5 years. The current 5 years is sufficient and should not be extended beyond that. The curriculum focuses not only on the fundamentals of safety, but also on the controls that workers can utilize to mitigate potential hazards. Safety strategies/techniques, especially in the middle of a pandemic, are updated very often. Everyone would agree this is not the time to become lax with safety training and it would not be a good time to "take our foot off the pedal" regarding safety; we need to recognize safety training never ends for the construction industry.

CAMERON CHAMPLIN, PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS LOCAL UNION 777

Although they believe this bill is well-intended and an attempt to ease the burden requiring workers in the construction industry to take an OSHA 10-hour course every 5 years instead of the current 10 years, this is time missed from work and therefore saves money for worker compensation claims.

Reported by: Marie Knudsen, Assistant Clerk

Date: April 4, 2021