

IBEW LOCAL 292



SF1787 Electric Panel Upgrades, House Energy Committee

February 13, 2023

Thank you, Chair Frentz and members of the Senate Energy Committee. for allowing us to testify regarding SF1787 the Electrical panel upgrade bill.

My name is Andy Snope, I am the Legislative Director for IBEW Local 292. We represent 5000 electrical workers who work throughout the state of Minnesota. Our Members and the contractors our members work for, perform this work. Much of the work of electrical panel upgrades for residential dwellings are performed by small electrical contractors; one or two person shops.

While we move towards more renewable energy production and towards electrification, this bill is a piece of that puzzle to provide homes with the needed added electrical capacity to become electrification ready. In conjunction with electrical infrastructure upgrades to the distribution system, electrical panel upgrades will help to provide the homeowner with increased capacity and circuit expansion space to add solar production and energy storage, electric vehicle charging, air-source HVAC and water heating systems and added electrical appliance within their home. This bill addresses the greatest need first, typically in areas of underserved communities. In my years in the industry as an electrician, I saw the greatest need for this work in the areas of the metro and rural parts of the state where the largest economic disparity existed. Most typically in single and multifamily rental units where most likely landlords are not going to make the investment or homeowners don't have the economic means to make those investments in home energy and efficiency needs, this bill helps to overcome those economic barriers.

The IBEW has been working with other stakeholders on this proposal for quite some time. Not only does this bill provide the incentive for homeowners to upgrade electrical panels, but it also helps to provide an economic stimulus and jobs component by providing these grants to Electrical Contractors and Electricians who perform this work, mostly small business. The language within this bill reiterates the state requirements that this work is performed by a licensed electrical contractor and electricians. Language within this bill also requires that the workers employed by an electrical contractor are paid area standard wages and benefits. These requirements help to assure the homeowner and property owner that they will be receiving the highest quality installation, using the highest quality, best trained individuals to perform the work.

Thank you Senator Xiong for all your work with stakeholders to author and bring forward this bill. Committee Members, please support SF 1787.

Thank you for your time today and I am available to answer any questions.

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