



Electrical Association

3100 Humboldt Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55408
April 3, 2024

Chair Klein and Members of the Commerce Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SF4455 with amendments. I am the Director of Membership and Government Affairs for the Electrical Association, an association of 265 electrical contractors around the state, performing electrical installations in your community. The Electrical Association provides support to these small businesses through government advocacy, continuing education, workforce strategies, and apprenticeship education.

First, I want to thank Senator Pappas and the City of St. Paul for thoughtfully addressing our concerns regarding the initial bill language. Allowing electricians to use their existing license instead of requiring yet another license is very much appreciated. Electricians remove outdated wiring as part of their regular work and these precious metals should be recaptured and recycled, not placed in a dumpster to be hauled to a landfill.

Copper theft is real and expensive. Street lights, EV Charging stations, the money thieves receive for the copper they steal is tiny in comparison to the repairs needed to fix their crimes. In rural Minnesota a particular type of installation that I prefer not to reveal so as to not give thieves ideas, might yield \$6,000-\$7,000 in copper at a scrap yard, but costs \$30,000-\$50,000 to repair. A member fixed one of these installations, only to be called back after the following weekend to fix it again because the thieves struck twice. Security needed to be put in place to prevent future thefts. Please contact me directly if you'd like to learn more. Over the past week I've heard stories of this occurring in St. Cloud, Mankato, and New Ulm.

We'd like to be a part of making these copper thefts more difficult so the good work electrical contractors perform stays in place. By allowing existing licensing as credentials to sell copper, it makes certain people with a business reason can sell copper while making it more difficult for those that cannot provide proper justification to get paid for stolen copper.

Sincerely,

Michelle Dreier
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Electrical Association
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Empowering Contractors