



Independent Electrical Contractors
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April 5, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, and Members of the United States House of Representatives:

On behalf of the Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC), I write to urge a 'Yes' vote on H.R. 6655, *A Stronger Workforce for America Act*. This legislation makes much needed reforms to and reauthorizes the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA).

Established in 1957, IEC is a 52-chapter association representing 4,000 company members, over 8,000 electrical workers, and nearly 16,000 apprentices seeking to become electricians through its registered apprenticeship program. Headquartered in Arlington, Va., IEC is the nation's premier trade association representing America's independent electrical and systems contractors. IEC National aggressively works with the industry to establish a competitive environment for the merit shop—a philosophy that promotes the concept of free enterprise, open competition, and economic opportunity for all.

The electrical contracting field, and the construction industry as a whole, continues to face an ongoing shortage of qualified individuals entering the industry. Some estimates indicate the demand for electricians to be more than double the average demand for all other jobs. Not having enough qualified electricians increases the time it takes to complete projects, increases costs, and stifles the ability for merit shop electrical contractors to grow their business.

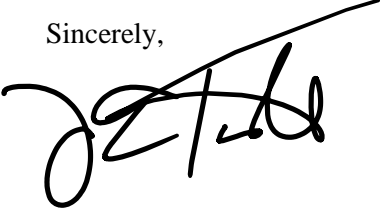
Among the many provisions included in H.R. 6655 that IEC believes will help address the shortage of qualified electricians are:

- The mandate that 50 percent of the funds allocated to any local workforce area be spent specifically on skills development rather than administration and other costs.
- Consolidated innovation grants that will allow some states and local workforce boards to pursue innovative reforms to their workforce systems.
- The establishment of a Critical Industry Skills fund, which will encourage and incentivize employer engagement by creating a new fund to reimburse employers and those working with them who prepare workers for employment in their state's fastest growing economic sectors.
- The creation of performance metrics which includes holding local areas accountable for the percentage of workforce system participants enrolled in employer-driven upskilling programs, including on-the-job training and apprenticeship.
- The increased cap on state spending for incumbent-worker training which allows these funds to be spent more flexibly in the geographic areas where they are needed most.
- The revamped process for states to determine eligible-training-providers which uses verified employment outcomes to determine eligibility.

The leading educator for merit shop electrical and systems contractors

We believe these changes to the public workforce system are a step in the right direction and will serve to help address the electrical contracting industry's workforce needs more effectively. For these reasons IEC requests your support of H.R. 6655, *A Stronger Workforce for America Act*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JET', with a long horizontal line extending from the top of the signature.

Jason E. Todd
Vice President, Government Affairs
Independent Electrical Contractors