

- SUBJECT:** Appropriating fees generated through regulation of electricians
- COMMITTEE:** Appropriations — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 23 ayes — Heflin, Luna, Berman, Branch, B. Brown, F. Brown, J. Davis, Deshotel, Eiland, Hamric, Hope, Hupp, Isett, E. Jones, Kolkhorst, McClendon, Menendez, Raymond, Solis, Stick, Truitt, Turner, Wohlgemuth
- 0 nays
- 6 absent — Crownover, Dukes, Ellis, Gutierrez, Pickett, Pitts
- WITNESSES:** No public hearing
- BACKGROUND:** The 78th Legislature during its regular session enacted HB 1487 by Driver, the Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act, creating a state license for six classes of electricians and two classes of contractors and adopting national standards for electrical work in Texas. It gives oversight and enforcement responsibility to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). The fiscal note attached to HB 1487 identified the need for an additional 32 employees to process the anticipated 58,000 licensees.
- Generally, when pending legislation would generate fee revenue, lawmakers adopt a contingency rider in the general appropriations act giving direction to appropriate the funds if the bill becomes law and the fees are generated. HB 1 by Heflin, the general appropriations act for fiscal 2004-05, contains no contingency rider for HB 1487.
- DIGEST:** HB 24 would appropriate to TDLR or the Commission on Licensing and Regulation the fees collected during fiscal 2004-05, starting September 1, 2003, from registration of electricians for purposes of administering the Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act. It would increase by 32 the full-time equivalent position limitation established for TDLR in HB 1. Any future increases in the cost of state employee benefits connected with administration of HB 1487 would have to be paid by the fee-generated funds.

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The bill would take effect immediately if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect on the 91st day after the last day of the third called session.

**NOTES:**

The fiscal note for HB 24 estimates a general revenue cost of \$3.9 million in fiscal 2004-05.

An almost identical bill, HB 9 by Heflin, passed the House and the Senate during the first called session, but died when it was not signed in the Senate due to lack of a quorum on the final day of the session.