- 1 HB357
- 2 216716-1
- 3 By Representatives Pettus and Rich
- 4 RFD: Boards, Agencies and Commissions
- 5 First Read: 15-FEB-22

1	216716-1:n	:01/26/2022:KMS/cr LSA2022-412
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8	SYNOPSIS:	Under existing law, the Alabama Board of
9		Electrical Contractors is responsible for the
10		licensing and regulation of electrical contractors
11		in the state.
12		This bill would provide for the definition
13		of an electrical worker and a provisional license,
14		and would delete references to master electrician.
15		This bill would provide further for the
16		election of board officers and for the duties of
17		the board, including the subpoena of witnesses, the
18		investigation of complaints, and providing for
19		reciprocity.
20		This bill would provide an individual
21		previously issued a provisional license three years
22		to take the licensure examination, and would
23		require the board to waive the examination fee for
24		one sitting.
25		This bill would lessen the time frame during
26		which an expired license may be restored from five
27		years to two years after expiration.

This bill would also provide further for exemptions and would remove the authority of a county or municipality to require an additional electrical contracting proficiency examination before issuing a local license to perform electrical work within the county or municipality.

Amendment 621 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 111.05 of the Official Recompilation of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended, prohibits a general law whose purpose or effect would be to require a new or increased expenditure of local funds from becoming effective with regard to a local governmental entity without enactment by a 2/3 vote unless: it comes within one of a number of specified exceptions; it is approved by the affected entity; or the Legislature appropriates funds, or provides a local source of revenue, to the entity for the purpose.

The purpose or effect of this bill would be to require a new or increased expenditure of local funds within the meaning of the amendment. However, the bill does not require approval of a local governmental entity or enactment by a 2/3 vote to become effective because it comes within one of the specified exceptions contained in the amendment.

1	Α	BILL

TO BE ENTITLED

3 AN ACT

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To amend Sections 34-36-3, 34-36-4, 34-36-6, 34-36-7, 34-36-8, 34-36-9, 34-36-13, and Section 34-36-16, as amended by Act 2021-272, 2021 Regular Session, Code of Alabama 1975, relating to the Alabama Board of Electrical Contractors; to provide further for definitions, to delete references to master electrician; to provide further for the election of board officers; to provide further for the duties of the board, including the subpoena of witnesses, the investigation of complaints, and providing for reciprocity; to provide an individual previously issued a provisional license three years to take the licensure examination, and require the board to waive the examination fee for one sitting; to lessen the time frame for restoring an expired license from five years to two years; to provide further for exemptions; to remove the authority of a county or municipality to require an additional electrical contracting proficiency examination before issuing a local license to work within the county or municipality; and in connection therewith would have as its purpose or effect the requirement of a new or increased expenditure of local funds within the meaning of Amendment 621 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 111.05 of the Official Recompilation of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended.

- 1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:
- 2 Section 1. Sections 34-36-3, 34-36-4, 34-36-6,
- 3 34-36-7, 34-36-8, 34-36-9, 34-36-13, and Section 34-36-16, as
- 4 amended by Act 2021-272, 2021 Regular Session, Code of Alabama
- 5 1975, are amended to read as follows:
- 6 "\$34-36-3.
- 7 "The following terms shall have the meanings
 8 respectively ascribed to them used in this chapter, for the
- 9 purposes of this chapter, unless the context clearly requires
- 10 a different meaning:
- 11 "(1) BOARD. The Alabama Board of Electrical
- 12 Contractors.
- "(2) DIRECTOR. The Executive Director of the Alabama
- 14 Board of Electrical Contractors.
- "(3) ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING. Any job or project in
- 16 the State of Alabama wherein the electrical contractor
- proposes to bid, install, maintain, alter, or repair any
- 18 electric wiring devices or equipment.
- "(4) ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR. Any person, firm, or
- corporation who is engaged in the business of soliciting and
- installing electrical power or control systems; maintaining,
- 22 altering, or repairing electrical power or control systems,
- any electrical wiring devices, equipment, or any other
- 24 electrical apparatus. A person who possesses the necessary
- 25 qualifications, training, and technical knowledge to plan, lay
- out, and supervise the installation of electrical wiring,
- apparatus, or equipment for lighting, heating, power, or

1	controls and who possesses any of the following
2	qualifications:
3	"a. Four years of practical experience as a
4	journeyman electrician in charge of jobs.
5	"b. Four years of experience in the design and
6	construction of electrical systems.
7	"(5) ELECTRICAL WORKER. Any person who has received
8	training, or is receiving training, in the installation,
9	maintenance, and repair of electrical systems and circuitry
10	and has demonstrated skills and knowledge concerning the
11	potential hazards of electricity. The position of electrical
12	worker does not require a license from this board. An
13	electrical worker may only perform electrical work in this
14	state if he or she is any of the following:
15	"a. Employed by, and responsible to, a properly
16	licensed electrical contractor.
17	"b. Employed by a company that employs a properly
18	licensed electrical contractor and the electrical worker is
19	responsible to that licensed electrical contractor.
20	"c. Employed by a workforce staffing company that
21	contracts to provide workers to a licensed electrical
22	contractor and responsible to a licensed electrical
23	contractor.
24	"(5)(6) JOURNEYMAN ELECTRICIAN. A person who
25	possesses necessary qualifications, training, and technical
26	knowledge to install electrical wiring, apparatus, or
27	equipment lighting, heating, or power or control covered by

this chapter. He or she shall work under a master or state

certified an electrical contractor and shall be capable of

doing work according to plans and specifications furnished to

him or her and in accordance with standard rules and

regulations governing such work.

"(6) (7) LICENSE. A valid and current certificate of registration issued by the director on behalf of the board which shall give the named person to whom it is issued authority to engage in the activity prescribed thereon.

" $\frac{(7)}{(8)}$ LICENSEE. Any person holding a license issued by the board.

"(8)(9) PERSON. A human person, not a legal entity.

"(10) PROVISIONAL LICENSE. A person who holds a limited license issued by the board before August 31, 2012, to perform electrical contracting tasks and functions only within the boundaries and jurisdiction of the local authority where the licensee holds a local electrical contractor license.

"§34-36-4.

"(a) The Alabama Board of Electrical Contractors is created.

"(b) A person to be eligible for appointment to serve on the board shall be a citizen and resident of Alabama. Each person appointed to the board from each congressional district shall be actively engaged in the electrical construction contracting business as a qualified person with electrical construction background of not less than five consecutive years, and shall hold certificates to validate his

electrical construction field immediately preceding the appointment. The two persons appointed to the board as at-large members shall be members of the Alabama State Electrical Workers Association. The membership of the board should be inclusive and should reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban/rural Governor shall coordinate his or her appointments to assure the board membership is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the diversity of the state.

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"(c) The board shall consist of nine members to be appointed by the Governor. One member shall be appointed from each congressional district, and there shall be two at-large members who shall be appointed from within the state. The board members from the First, Second, and Third Congressional Districts shall be appointed for terms of one year; the board members from the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Congressional Districts shall be appointed for terms of two years; and the board member from the Seventh Congressional District as well as the at-large members shall be appointed for terms of three years. Thereafter, all board members shall be appointed for terms of three years. Each term shall expire on June 30 of the last year of the term, and no member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. Vacancies on the board for any cause shall be filled by appointment by the Governor for the remainder of the unexpired term. Members shall serve until their successors are appointed.

- "(d) The board shall meet at least semiannually and as often as necessary. The board shall meet annually to elect officers from its membership, whose initial terms shall expire on June 30 next following their election. To be eligible for election as an officer, a board member shall have served for at least two years on the board at the time of election. Special meetings of the board may be held as the board provides in its rules and regulations. The board shall meet at least once in the first quarter and once in the third quarter of the year. Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum.
 - "(e) The board may adopt rules and regulations to carry out this chapter.

- "(f) Any member of the board or duly appointed hearing officer designated by the board may administer oaths and take testimony concerning all matters within the jurisdiction of the board.
- "(g) The board may sue and be sued in its official name. Absent negligence, wantonness, recklessness, or deliberate misconduct, members of the board are immune from liability for all good faith acts performed in the execution of their duties of the board.
- "(h) The board shall adopt a seal for its use containing the words: Alabama <u>Board of Electrical Contractors'</u>
 <u>Licensing Board Contractors.</u>
- "(i) The board may employ, and at its pleasure discharge, an executive director. The board may hire other

officers, attorneys, and administrative employees which may be necessary to implement this chapter. The board may employ, on an as needed basis, an investigator investigators to investigate complaints. The board shall not employ electrical inspectors nor provide for any electrical inspections. The board shall outline the duties and fix the compensation and expense allowances of all employees pursuant to the Merit System Act of Alabama.

"(j) The board is subject to the Alabama Sunset Law and is classified as an enumerated agency pursuant to Section 41-20-3. The board shall automatically terminate on October 1, 2012, and every four years thereafter, unless a bill is enacted that the board be continued, modified, or reestablished.

"(k) Each board member shall be accountable to the Governor for the proper performance of his or her duties as a member of the board. The Governor shall investigate any complaints or unfavorable reports concerning the actions of the board and shall take appropriate action thereon, including removal of any board member for misfeasance, malfeasance, neglect of duty, commission of a felony, incompetence, or permanent inability to perform official duties. A board member may be removed at the request of the board after failing to attend three consecutive properly noticed meetings.

"§34-36-6.

"(a) By rule, the board shall make provisions to do all of the following:

"(1) Prepare or approve all examinations of applicants for licenses for electrical contractors and journeyman electricians.

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- "(2) Determine the qualifications of electrical contractors to engage in the business of electrical contracting.
- "(3) Determine the qualifications of journeyman electricians to engage in electrical work.
- "(4) Provide for the investigation of written complaints filed with the board concerning alleged violations of this chapter and any rules adopted by the board.
- witnesses and command the production of any books, documents, records, and papers the board deems pertinent to any matter under investigation. The board, by order of the chair or executive director, may require any person to produce within the state, at a reasonable time and place as the board may designate, any books, documents, records, or papers kept in any office or place without or within this state, or certified copies thereof, whenever the production is reasonably required and pertinent to any matter under investigation before or by the board, in order that an examination may be made by the board, or by any person employed by the board.
- "(6) Investigate written complaints relating to faulty, inefficient, unlicensed, or unsafe electrical work likely to endanger life, health, or property.

"(7) Provide for reciprocity with other states in the registration and licensing of electrical contractors and journeyman electricians, provided that those other states have requirements substantially equal to or greater than the requirements of this state for registration and licensure and that a similar privilege is offered to licensees of this board.

- "(b) The board may suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue or renew a license and impose a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000), after notice and opportunity for a hearing pursuant to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, upon proof of any of the following actions by a licensee or applicant:
 - "(1) Violating any provision of this chapter.
- "(2) Attempting to procure a license to practice electrical contracting or to work as a master electrician an electrical contractor or journeyman electrician by bribery or fraudulent misrepresentations.
- "(3) Being convicted or found guilty, regardless of adjudication, of a crime in any jurisdiction which directly relates to the practice of electrical contracting, working as a journeyman electrician, or the ability to practice electrical contracting or to work as a master electrician or journeyman electrician.
- "(4) Making or filing a report or record which the licensee knows to be false, willfully failing to file a report or record required by state or federal law, willfully impeding

or obstructing such filing, or inducing another person to
impede or obstruct such filing. Such reports or records shall
include only those which are signed in the capacity of a
licensed electrical contractor, master electrician, or

journeyman electrician.

- "(5) Being found guilty of fraud or deceit or of negligence, incompetency, or misconduct in the practice of electrical contracting or working as a master electrician an electrical contractor or journeyman electrician.
- "(6) Practicing $\frac{\partial}{\partial x}$ with a revoked, suspended, or inactive license.
- "(7) Aiding or abetting any person to evade any provision of this chapter.
- "(8) Knowingly combining or conspiring with any person by allowing one's license to be used by any unlicensed person with the intent to evade this chapter. When a licensee allows his or her license to be used by any firm, partnership, association, or corporation without having any active participation in the operations or management of the firm, partnership, association, or corporation, such the act constitutes prima facie evidence of an intent to evade this chapter.
- "(9) Acting in the capacity of a contractor under any license issued under this chapter except in the name of the licensee as set forth on the issued license.
- "(10) Failing to sufficiently and consistently oversee and be responsible for the electrical work purportedly

performed by an electrical worker or a journeyman electrician
under the oversight of an electrical contractor or his or her
affiliated company, in order to ensure that all electrical
work is compliant with the applicable code or codes and the
health, safety, and welfare of the public.

- "(c) Upon finding a person, corporation, or business entity engaged in electrical contracting as defined in this chapter to be in violation of any of the provisions contained herein within this chapter, the board may investigate the activities of licensed and unlicensed contractors. If the board finds that a person, corporation, or business entity is engaged in performing electrical contracting covered by this chapter without having obtained a proper license, the board may do any of the following:
 - "(1) Deny an application for licensure with cause.
- "(2) Impose an administrative fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000).
 - "(3) Issue a cease and desist order.
- "(4) Petition the circuit court of the county where the act occurred to enforce the cease and desist order or collect the assessed fine, or both.
- "(d) Any person aggrieved by any adverse action taken by the board may appeal the adverse action to the circuit court of the county in which the adverse action occurred in accordance with the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act.
- 27 "\$34-36-7.

"(a) All applicants for licensure must shall submit a completed application, application fee, and supportive documentation of qualifications before taking an examination approved by the board. The board shall examine applicants at least once every three months according to the method deemed by it to be the most appropriate to test the qualifications of applicants. Any national standardized or written examination proctored by an independent third party which the board shall approve as substantially similar to the examination required to be licensed under this chapter may be administered to all applicants in lieu of or in conjunction with any other examination which the board shall give to test the qualifications of applicants. The board shall also have the right to may establish such norms of achievement as shall be required for a passing grade. The board may, by rule, may adopt the National Electrical Code for the purpose of examinations.

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"(b) The board may recognize a license issued by any other state that, in the opinion of the board, has standards of practice or licensure equal to or higher than those required by this state. The board shall actively seek to reciprocate with those states meeting such standards. The board shall actively seek to maintain those states currently under agreement.

"(c)(b) No license shall be issued except in compliance with this chapter and none shall be issued except to a person or a person in a firm, partnership, association,

or corporation. A firm, partnership, association, or corporation, as such, shall not be licensed. A licensee shall be a citizen of the United States or, if not a citizen of the United States, a person who is legally present in the United States with appropriate documentation from the federal government.

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"(d) An individual who has successfully passed, on or before January 1, 2010, with a minimum score of 70 percent, or an individual who has successfully passed after January 1, 2010, with a minimum score of 75 percent, a nationally standardized proctored electrical examination administered in the State of Alabama, by Block and Associates, International Code Council, Experior, Promissor, Thomson Prometric, PROV, or any other exam approved by the board, shall be deemed to be in compliance with the testing requirement set forth by the board for licensure as an electrical contractor. Individuals meeting this qualification shall also be required to complete all other qualifications set forth by this chapter and the board prior to issuance of an electrical contractor license. Electrical contractor applicants affected by this provision shall have until July 1, 2011, to apply for licensure without any further examination requirements.

"(c) An individual holding a provisional license issued by the board shall have three calendar years after the effective date of the act adding this subsection to take and pass a nationally standardized proctored electrical examination approved by the board for licensure without any

further examination requirements. If the provisional licensee

does not pass the examination within those three years, the

provisional license shall expire. A provisional license that

expires may not be renewed. The board shall waive the

examination fee one time during the three-year time period

provided by this subsection.

"\$34-36-8.

- "(a) All licenses shall expire annually or at other times designated by the board. All applications for renewal of licenses shall be filed with the director prior to the expiration date, accompanied by the annual renewal fee prescribed by the board.
- "(b) The board is authorized to may establish or adopt, or both, continuing education requirements and may approve the program or programs providing education to fulfill the requirements. The board shall set the minimum standards of continuing education. All persons holding an electrical contractor license shall be required to complete 14 hours of continuing education every two years.
- "(c) The board may promulgate adopt rules regarding the approval of continuing education courses and the accounting for continuing education hours.
- "(d) Any person licensed by the board may elect an inactive status certificate by notifying the board in writing. The fee for the issuance and renewal of an inactive status certificate shall be established by the board. The board shall provide by rule those activities which an inactive status

certificate holder may engage in and for a procedure for the reinstatement as an active status certificate holder.

"\$34-36-9.

"An expired A license for an electrical contractor which has expired for failure to renew may only be restored within five two years from the date of expiration after application and payment of the prescribed restoration fee and satisfaction of all continuing education requirements, if applicable. The restoration fee shall be established by the board and shall be due upon application for restoration. The restoration fee shall be in addition to all accrued renewal fees. Any license which has not been restored within five two years following its expiration may not be renewed, restored, or reissued thereafter. The holder of such a cancelled license may apply for and obtain a valid license only upon compliance with all relevant requirements as prescribed by this chapter or by rule for issuance of a new license.

"§34-36-13.

"(a) No person shall engage in the electrical contracting business or perform work as a master an electrical contractor or journeyman electrician unless such person shall have received a license from the board or from the county or municipality where the electrical contracting work is being performed; provided, however, the provisions of this chapter shall not apply. The following activities, people, and entities are exempted from regulation by or obtaining a license from the board:

"(1) To the installation, construction, or

maintenance of The activity of installing, constructing, or

maintaining power systems for the generation and secondary

distribution of electric current constructed under the

provisions of the National Electrical Safety Code which

regulates the safety requirements of utilities.

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- "(2) To the installation, construction, maintenance, or repair of The activity of installing, constructing, maintaining, or repairing telephone or signal systems by or for public utilities or their corporate affiliates, when such work pertains to the services furnished by such utilities.
- "(3) To any Any technician employed by a municipal franchised CATV system, when such work pertains to CATV.
- "(4) To any master or journeyman electrician
 employed by a state licensee of the board or a licensee of a
 county or municipality where the contract work is being
 performed Any electrical worker who is employed, either
 directly or through a workforce staffing company, by a
 statewide licensee of the board.
- "(5) To the The owner of any premises or an employee of any such owner electrical worker employed by the premises owner when performing electrical work or installing, constructing, maintaining, altering, or repairing electrical wiring, equipment, or apparatus on such premises.
- "(6) To an employee An employee of an electric utility when installing or repairing electric appliances and equipment for a customer.

"(7) To any Any retail merchant, or its employees making the installation of or the repair or maintenance on any appliance that the merchant has sold; or to any modular or manufacturer of the modular housing industry within the state which is regulated by state and federal governments.

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- "(8) To the installation, construction, or

 maintenance of The activity of installing, constructing, or
 maintaining systems that operate on 25 volts or less.
- "(9) To the installation, construction, or

 maintenance of The activity of installing, constructing, or
 maintaining direct broadcast satellite services.
- "(10) The activity of an electrical worker when properly responsible to a licensee of the board.
- "(b) (1) No license shall be issued by the board without an examination of the applicant for the purpose of ascertaining his or her qualifications for such the work, but no such. Reciprocal licensees are exempt from re-examination by the board. No examination shall be required for the annual renewal of such a license.
- "(2) This section shall in no way prohibit the governing authorities of each county and or municipality in the State of Alabama state from exercising their authority to require any person engaging in the electrical contracting business or performing work as a master or journeyman electrician to stand and attain a passing grade on an examination administered by such county or municipality to evidence their ability and proficiency to engage in the

electrical contracting business or to perform work as a master or journeyman electrician within their jurisdiction; provided, however, that any person who holds a valid statewide license issued by the board shall be deemed qualified and, upon satisfactory proof of the license, shall be allowed to perform forthwith electrical work in any county or municipality under the terms and conditions set forth in this chapter, if such person has the proper county or municipal building permit and business license to purchase a local license or permit to perform work within the jurisdiction of the county or municipality.

"(c) All persons performing work under a license issued by the board must abide by all state and local laws and ordinances.

"\$34-36-16.

- "(a) Except as provided in Section 13A-9-111.1, it shall be unlawful for any person to violate any provision of this chapter regulating electrical contracting, and any person convicted of such violation shall be punished as prescribed for a Class A misdemeanor.
- "(b) It shall be unlawful, except as otherwise provided, on or after December 31, 2011, for a person not licensed as an electrical contractor to solicit, represent, seek to perform, or perform those tasks and functions that can only be performed by a licensed electrical contractor in accordance with this chapter.

(c) Subsection (b) shall not apply to an electrical contractor who has taken an examination offered by the board within the preceding 12 months, who holds a license or permit issued by a county or municipal government to perform the tasks and functions that can only be performed by a licensed electrical contractor, and who performs those tasks and functions within the boundaries of the county or municipality that issued the license or permit."

Section 2. Although this bill would have as its purpose or effect the requirement of a new or increased expenditure of local funds, the bill is excluded from further requirements and application under Amendment 621 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 111.05 of the Official Recompilation of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended, because the bill defines a new crime or amends the definition of an existing crime.

Section 3. This act shall become effective on the first day of the third month following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.