

2/4/2015

Senate Business, Labor & Economic Affairs Committee
Senator Ed Buttrey Chairman

Re: House Bill 80

Chairman Buttrey & Members of The Committee,

My name is Scott E. Lemert. I am a licensed master plumber, currently serving as the Vice-Chairman for the State of Montana Board of Plumbers. Due to a scheduling conflict, I am unable to testify before the committee regarding House Bill 80. Please accept this letter on behalf of myself and the Board in strong support of this bill.

The Board would like to emphasize that it is not advocating the elimination of the practical portion of the examination, rather it is asking for the flexibility to administer the practical portion at its discretion, as provided in HB 80. Here are some reasons for the Board's support of this bill:

1. Should the current 3rd party test provider withdraw from providing the practical exam to license candidates, whether by choice or due to contract termination, HB 80 will allow the Board to at least temporarily discontinuing the practical exam without interrupting the licensure process for qualified applicants who are waiting to go to work. In the absence of HB 80, if the 3rd party provider is no longer able or willing to provide the practical exam the Board would incur additional costs to administer the practical exam, and those costs would be passed on to the applicants.
2. Developing, maintaining, and administering an examination that measures an applicant's skills through practical demonstration in a cost-effective manner can be difficult, and it is an exam method that is used in only a few jurisdictions.
3. By the time a person applies to the Board for a plumber license, he or she has acquired thousands of hours of experience under varying degrees of supervision, which evidences a level of practical demonstration of skills.

Thank you for your time on this matter. The Montana Board of Plumbers hopes that you will support HB 80.

Sincerely,

Scott E. Lemert
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