



Testimony

House Bill 1391

Presented to the Texas House Committee on Licensing & Administrative Procedures

By Jorge Antonio Borrego

Chairman King and Members of the Committee:

I am Jorge Borrego, postsecondary analyst for Next Generation Texas at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and I am testifying in support of HB 1391. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and thank you Representative Schaefer for your leadership on this bill. The Foundation recently conducted [research](#) examining the state of career and technical education in Texas public schools. What we found was that there are large gaps between workforce needs and programs of study across multiple sectors but in particular the skilled trades, such as electricians and HVAC technicians. As the booming Texas economy continues to attract businesses and residents from across the country, these gaps will only worsen. It is estimated that by 2030, Texas will be facing a statewide shortage of over 10,000 electricians.

In 2019, there were only 196 students who completed a program of study in electrical studies. One of the reasons we believe that there is a shortage of completers in these programs is that the barrier of entry to becoming a licensed residential wireman is too high. Under the current statute, a person must complete at least 4,000 hours of on-the-job training under the supervision of a master electrician or residential wireman. This equates to 500 eight-hour workdays or almost two years worth of work. This on-the-job training often comes at a reduced or no wage. The Foundation supports HB 1391 as it seeks to create an alternative path to licensure for a prospective residential wireman by allowing the successful completion of a career and technology education program.

We ask that you favorably report HB 1391 out of committee. Thank you for your time, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

