- 1 SB224
- 2 204456-1
- 3 By Senator Chesteen
- 4 RFD: Governmental Affairs
- 5 First Read: 10-FEB-21

204456-1:n:02/24/2020:KMS/bm LSA2020-449 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Under existing law, the Alabama Board of 8 SYNOPSIS: Electrical Contractors is responsible for the 9 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 election of board officers and for the duties of 16 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 years to two years after expiration. 27

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.

7 Amendment 621 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 111.05 of the 8 9 Official Recompilation of the Constitution of 10 Alabama of 1901, as amended, prohibits a general 11 law whose purpose or effect would be to require a new or increased expenditure of local funds from 12 13 becoming effective with regard to a local 14 governmental entity without enactment by a 2/3 vote 15 unless: it comes within one of a number of 16 specified exceptions; it is approved by the 17 affected entity; or the Legislature appropriates 18 funds, or provides a local source of revenue, to 19 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.

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1	A BILL
2	TO BE ENTITLED
3	AN ACT
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5	To amend Sections 34-36-3, 34-36-4, 34-36-6,
6	34-36-7, 34-36-8, 34-36-9, 34-36-13, and 34-36-16, Code of
7	Alabama 1975, relating to the Alabama Board of Electrical
8	Contractors; to provide further for definitions, to delete
9	references to master electrician; to provide further for the
10	election of board officers; to provide further for the duties
11	of the board, including the subpoena of witnesses, the
12	investigation of complaints, and providing for reciprocity; to
13	provide an individual previously issued a provisional license
14	three years to take the licensure examination, and require the
15	board to waive the examination fee for one sitting; to lessen
16	the time frame for restoring an expired license from five
17	years to two years; to provide further for exemptions; to
18	remove the authority of a county or municipality to require an
19	additional electrical contracting proficiency examination
20	before issuing a local license to work within the county or
21	municipality; and in connection therewith would have as its
22	purpose or effect the requirement of a new or increased
23	expenditure of local funds within the meaning of Amendment 621
24	of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as
25	Section 111.05 of the Official Recompilation of the
26	Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended.
27	BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

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

doing work according to plans and specifications furnished to 1 2 him or her and in accordance with standard rules and regulations governing such work. 3

"(6)(7) LICENSE. A valid and current certificate of 4 5 registration issued by the director on behalf of the board which shall give the named person to whom it is issued 6 7 authority to engage in the activity prescribed thereon.

"(7)(8) LICENSEE. Any person holding a license 8 9 issued by the board.

10 "(8)(9) PERSON. A human person, not a legal entity. "(10) PROVISIONAL LICENSE. A person who holds a 11 limited license issued by the board before August 31, 2012, to 12 13 perform electrical contracting tasks and functions only within 14 the boundaries and jurisdiction of the local authority where 15 the licensee holds a local electrical contractor license. "§34-36-4.

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"(a) The Alabama Board of Electrical Contractors is 17 18 created.

"(b) A person to be eligible for appointment to 19 20 serve on the board shall be a citizen and resident of Alabama. 21 Each person appointed to the board from each congressional district shall be actively engaged in the electrical 22 23 construction contracting business as a qualified person with 24 electrical construction background of not less than five 25 consecutive years, and shall hold certificates to validate his 26 or her competence as an electrical contractor in the 27 electrical construction field immediately preceding the

<u>appointment</u>. 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, and economic diversity of the state.

"(c) The board shall consist of nine members to be 6 7 appointed by the Governor. One member shall be appointed from each congressional district, and there shall be two at-large 8 9 members who shall be appointed from within the state. The 10 board members from the First, Second, and Third Congressional Districts shall be appointed for terms of one year; the board 11 members from the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Congressional 12 13 Districts shall be appointed for terms of two years; and the board member from the Seventh Congressional District as well 14 15 as the at-large members shall be appointed for terms of three years. Thereafter, all board members shall be appointed for 16 17 terms of three years. Each term shall expire on June 30 of the 18 last year of the term, and no member shall serve more than two 19 consecutive three-year terms. Vacancies on the board for any 20 cause shall be filled by appointment by the Governor for the 21 remainder of the unexpired term. Members shall serve until 22 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. 2 Special meetings of the board may be held as the board provides in its rules and regulations. The board shall meet at 3 least once in the first quarter and once in the third quarter 4 5 of the year. Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum. 6

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7 "(e) The board may adopt rules and regulations to 8 carry out this chapter.

"(f) Any member of the board or duly appointed 9 10 hearing officer designated by the board may administer oaths and take testimony concerning all matters within the 11 jurisdiction of the board. 12

13 "(g) The board may sue and be sued in its official 14 name. Absent negligence, wantonness, recklessness, or deliberate misconduct, members of the board are immune from 15 16 liability for all good faith acts performed in the execution 17 of their duties of the board.

18 "(h) The board shall adopt a seal for its use containing the words: Alabama Board of Electrical Contractors' 19 20 Licensing Board Contractors.

21 "(i) The board may employ, and at its pleasure 22 discharge, an executive director. The board may hire other 23 officers, attorneys, and administrative employees which may be 24 necessary to implement this chapter. The board may employ, on 25 an as needed basis, an investigator investigators to 26 investigate complaints. The board shall not employ electrical inspectors nor provide for any electrical inspections. The 27

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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.

10 "(k) Each board member shall be accountable to the Governor for the proper performance of his or her duties as a 11 member of the board. The Governor shall investigate any 12 13 complaints or unfavorable reports concerning the actions of 14 the board and shall take appropriate action thereon, including 15 removal of any board member for misfeasance, malfeasance, 16 neglect of duty, commission of a felony, incompetence, or permanent inability to perform official duties. A board member 17 18 may be removed at the request of the board after failing to attend three consecutive properly noticed meetings. 19

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"§34-36-6.

21 "(a) By rule, the board shall make provisions to do 22 all of the following:

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

"(2) Determine the qualifications of electrical
 contractors to engage in the business of electrical
 contracting.

4 "(3) Determine the qualifications of journeyman
5 electricians to engage in electrical work.

6 "(4) Provide for the investigation of written 7 complaints filed with the board concerning alleged violations 8 of this chapter and any rules adopted by the board.

"(5) Conduct investigations. The board may subpoena 9 10 witnesses and command the production of any books, documents, records, and papers the board deems pertinent to any matter 11 under investigation. The board, by order of the chair or 12 13 executive director, may require any person to produce within 14 the state, at a reasonable time and place as the board may 15 designate, any books, documents, records, or papers kept in any office or place without or within this state, or certified 16 copies thereof, whenever the production is reasonably required 17 18 and pertinent to any matter under investigation before or by the board, in order that an examination may be made by the 19 20 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.

24 "(7) Provide for reciprocity with other states in
 25 the registration and licensing of electrical contractors and
 26 journeyman electricians, provided that those other states have
 27 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:

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"(1) Violating any provision of this chapter.

11 "(2) Attempting to procure a license to practice 12 electrical contracting or to work as a master electrician <u>an</u> 13 <u>electrical contractor</u> or journeyman electrician by bribery or 14 fraudulent misrepresentations.

15 "(3) Being convicted or found guilty, regardless of 16 adjudication, of a crime in any jurisdiction which directly 17 relates to the practice of electrical contracting, working as 18 a journeyman electrician, or the ability to practice 19 electrical contracting or to work as a master electrician or 20 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
<u>electrical contractor</u> or journeyman electrician.

7 "(6) Practicing on with a revoked, suspended, or
8 inactive license.

9 "(7) Aiding or abetting any person to evade any 10 provision of this chapter.

"(8) Knowingly combining or conspiring with any 11 person by allowing one's license to be used by any unlicensed 12 13 person with the intent to evade this chapter. When a licensee 14 allows his or her license to be used by any firm, partnership, 15 association, or corporation without having any active participation in the operations or management of the firm, 16 partnership, association, or corporation, such the act 17 18 constitutes prima facie evidence of an intent to evade this 19 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 the 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 3 entity engaged in electrical contracting as defined in this 4 5 chapter to be in violation of any of the provisions contained herein within this chapter, the board may investigate the 6 7 activities of licensed and unlicensed contractors. If the board finds that a person, corporation, or business entity is 8 9 engaged in performing electrical contracting covered by this 10 chapter without having obtained a proper license, the board may do any of the following: 11

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"(1) Deny an application for licensure with cause.

"(2) Impose an administrative fine of not more than
five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

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"(3) Issue a cease and desist order.

16 "(4) Petition the circuit court of the county where 17 the act occurred to enforce the cease and desist order or 18 collect the assessed fine, or both.

19 "(d) Any person aggrieved by any adverse action 20 taken by the board may appeal the adverse action to the 21 circuit court of the county in which the adverse action 22 occurred in accordance with the Alabama Administrative 23 Procedure Act.

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"§34-36-7.

"(a) All applicants for licensure must <u>shall</u> 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 1 2 least once every three months according to the method deemed by it to be the most appropriate to test the qualifications of 3 applicants. Any national standardized or written examination 4 5 proctored by an independent third party which the board shall approve as substantially similar to the examination required 6 7 to be licensed under this chapter may be administered to all applicants in lieu of or in conjunction with any other 8 9 examination which the board shall give to test the 10 qualifications of applicants. The board shall also have the right to may establish such norms of achievement as shall be 11 12 required for a passing grade. The board may, by rule, may 13 adopt the National Electrical Code for the purpose of 14 examinations.

15 "(b) The board may recognize a license issued by any 16 other state that, in the opinion of the board, has standards 17 of practice or licensure equal to or higher than those 18 required by this state. The board shall actively seek to 19 reciprocate with those states meeting such standards. The 20 board shall actively seek to maintain those states currently 21 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.

"(d) An individual who has successfully passed, on 4 5 or before January 1, 2010, with a minimum score of 70 percent, or an individual who has successfully passed after January 1, 6 7 2010, with a minimum score of 75 percent, a nationally standardized proctored electrical examination administered in 8 the State of Alabama, by Block and Associates, International 9 10 Code Council, Experior, Promissor, Thomson Prometric, PROV, or any other exam approved by the board, shall be deemed to be in 11 12 compliance with the testing requirement set forth by the board 13 for licensure as an electrical contractor. Individuals meeting this qualification shall also be required to complete all 14 15 other qualifications set forth by this chapter and the board prior to issuance of an electrical contractor license. 16 17 Electrical contractor applicants affected by this provision 18 shall have until July 1, 2011, to apply for licensure without 19 any further examination requirements. 20 "(c) An individual holding a provisional license 21 issued by the board shall have three calendar years after the 22 effective date of the act adding this subsection to take and 23 pass a nationally standardized proctored electrical 24 examination approved by the board for licensure without any

25 <u>further examination requirements. If the provisional licensee</u>

26 does not pass the examination within those three years, the

27 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
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provided by this subsection. "§34-36-8.

5 "(a) All licenses shall expire annually or at other 6 times designated by the board. All applications for renewal of 7 licenses shall be filed with the director prior to the 8 expiration date, accompanied by the annual renewal fee 9 prescribed by the board.

10 "(b) The board is authorized to may establish or 11 adopt, or both, <u>continuing</u> education requirements and may 12 approve the program or programs providing education to fulfill 13 the requirements. The board shall set the minimum standards of 14 <u>continuing</u> education. All persons holding an electrical 15 contractor license shall be required to complete 14 hours of 16 continuing education every two years.

"(c) The board may promulgate <u>adopt</u> 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.

1 "An expired A license for an electrical contractor 2 which has expired for failure to renew may only be restored within five two years from the date of expiration after 3 application and payment of the prescribed restoration fee and 4 5 satisfaction of all continuing education requirements, if applicable. The restoration fee shall be established by the 6 7 board and shall be due upon application for restoration. The restoration fee shall be in addition to all accrued renewal 8 9 fees. Any license which has not been restored within five two 10 years following its expiration may not be renewed, restored, or reissued thereafter. The holder of such a cancelled license 11 may apply for and obtain a valid license only upon compliance 12 13 with all relevant requirements as prescribed by this chapter or by rule for issuance of a new license. 14

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"§34-36-13.

"(a) No person shall engage in the electrical 16 17 contracting business or perform work as a master an electrical 18 contractor or journeyman electrician unless such person shall have received a license from the board or from the county or 19 20 municipality where the electrical contracting work is being 21 performed; provided, however, the provisions of this chapter shall not apply. The following activities, people, and 22 entities are exempted from regulation by or obtaining a 23 24 license from the board:

"(1) To the installation, construction, or
 maintenance of The activity of installing, constructing, or
 <u>maintaining</u> 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.

4 "(2) To the installation, construction, maintenance,
5 or repair of The activity of installing, constructing,
6 <u>maintaining, or repairing</u> telephone or signal systems by or
7 for public utilities or their corporate affiliates, when such
8 work pertains to the services furnished by such utilities.

9 "(3) To any <u>Any</u> technician employed by a municipal 10 franchised CATV system, when such work pertains to CATV.

11 "(4) To any master or journeyman electrician
12 employed by a state licensee of the board or a licensee of a
13 county or municipality where the contract work is being
14 performed Any electrical worker who is employed, either
15 directly or through a workforce staffing company, by a
16 statewide licensee of the board.

"(5) To the <u>The</u> owner of any premises or an <u>employee</u>
of any such owner <u>electrical worker employed by the premises</u>
<u>owner</u> when performing electrical work or installing,
constructing, maintaining, altering, or repairing electrical
wiring, equipment, or apparatus on such premises.

"(6) To an employee <u>An employee</u> 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

1 manufacturer of the <u>modular</u> housing industry within the state
2 which is regulated by state and federal governments.

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

6 "(9) To the installation, construction, or
7 maintenance of The activity of installing, constructing, or
8 maintaining direct broadcast satellite services.

9 "(10) The activity of an electrical worker when
10 properly responsible to a licensee of the board.

11 "<u>(11) For the purposes of this chapter, the</u> 12 <u>definitions of "employer" and "employee" are found at Section</u> 13 <u>25-5-1.</u>

14 "(b)(1) No license shall be issued by the board 15 without an examination of the applicant for the purpose of 16 ascertaining his or her qualifications for such the work, but 17 no such. Reciprocal licensees are exempt from re-examination 18 by the board. No examination shall be required for the annual 19 renewal of such <u>a</u> license.

20 "(2) This section shall in no way prohibit the 21 governing authorities of each county and or municipality in 22 the State of Alabama state from exercising their authority to 23 require any person engaging in the electrical contracting 24 business or performing work as a master or journeyman 25 electrician to stand and attain a passing grade on an 26 examination administered by such county or municipality to 27 evidence their ability and proficiency to engage in the

1 electrical contracting business or to perform work as a master 2 or journeyman electrician within their jurisdiction; provided, however, that any person who holds a valid statewide license 3 issued by the board shall be deemed qualified and, upon 4 5 satisfactory proof of the license, shall be allowed to perform forthwith electrical work in any county or municipality under 6 7 the terms and conditions set forth in this chapter, if such person has the proper county or municipal building permit and 8 business license to purchase a local license or permit to 9 10 perform work within the jurisdiction of the county or municipality. 11 "(c) All persons performing work under a license 12 13 issued by the board must abide by all state and local laws and 14 ordinances.

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"§34-36-16.

"(a) 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.

26 "(c) Subsection (b) shall not apply to an electrical
 27 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 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.