

Rep. Johnson offered the following resolution:

**House Resolution No. 451.**

A resolution to express support for the creation of energy sector jobs in Michigan and to call for the creation of an energy trades institute, a partnership among the state, the electric utility industry, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Whereas, The rapid retirement of America's skilled trade workforce in the energy sector is a critical quality of life issue for the nation; and

Whereas, The 78 million individuals born between 1946 and 1964 that comprise the "Baby Boom Generation" comprise almost 45 percent of the American workforce, and close to 70 percent of the skilled energy trades workforce; and

Whereas, The Michigan Public Service Commission, the Legislature, and the Governor are contemplating policy reliability requirements for Michigan's electric utility industry as a result of severe storms in 2008 that resulted in lengthy losses of electric power that temporarily impacted trade, commerce, and the quality of life for thousands of Michigan residences. The assurance of electric service reliability and rapid storm response are essential to Michigan households and the productivity of the public, private, agricultural, commercial, and industrial sectors; and

Whereas, Electric line workers are the backbone of the electric utility industry and at the center of all efforts to operate and maintain the electric grid. Their services range from erecting transmission towers and utility poles to constructing and repairing the transmission lines that carry electricity from the power plant to every home, business, and enterprise; and

Whereas, There are a mere estimated 50,000 line workers across the country. Although these workers perform one of the most dangerous jobs, they also have one of the highest wage professions around the globe that does not require a college education. In Michigan, DTE Energy has only approximately 1,500 such tradesmen, and Consumers Power 500. It is estimated that 40 percent of the line worker labor force will approach retirement within 3 to 5 years; and

Whereas, The most recent Energy Policy Act Report to Congress indicated the national estimated shortage of line workers exceeded 10,000 and that the shortage of qualified candidates could limit the nation's ability to maintain and or increase electricity supply. Such a shortage could seriously impact the economic and national security of the United States; and

Whereas, By staking out a leadership position as America's leader in pre-apprentice and energy skilled trades training, Michigan can make a compelling case for federal funding to assist in addressing the national electric lineman labor shortage. Our state and its workers should act to create a strategy to retrain workers and create thousands of new high-wage jobs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we express support for the creation of energy sector jobs in Michigan and the creation of an energy trades institute, a partnership among the state, the electric utility industry, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. We call for efforts to make our state a national training ground for electric line workers through the use of unused job training funds and targeted investment; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the Governor and the Michigan Public Service Commission.