The Florida Senate

BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Regulated Industries

BILL:	CS/SB 1140
INTRODUCER:	Regulated Industries Committee and Senator Perry
SUBJECT:	Alarm Systems
DATE:	January 19, 2022
REVISED:	

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Kraemer	Imhof	RI	**Fav/CS**
2.			BI	
3.			RC	

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 1140 reduces the initial training and continuing education requirements for fire alarm system agents with certain specialized certifications or training relating to fire alarm systems. Eligible agents need only meet a requirement for two hours of training in false alarms prevention required by s. 489.5185(1)(b), F.S.

The bill amends the definition of a low-voltage alarm system project to include closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems used to signal or detect a burglary, fire, robbery, or medical emergency. Such systems use a closed circuit for the signal rather than the typical open transmission used in broadcast television.

The bill establishes an expedited permitting process for fire alarm system alterations, requiring the issuance, in person or electronically, of permits in specified circumstances.

The bill is effective July 1, 2022.

II. Present Situation:

Licensed Alarm System Contractors

Part II of ch. 489, F.S., dealing with electrical and alarm system contracting, sets forth requirements for qualified persons to be licensed if they have sufficient technical expertise in the

applicable trade, and have been tested on technical and business matters.[1] The Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board (ECLB) within the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) is responsible for licensing and regulating electrical and alarm system contractors in Florida under part II of ch. 489, F.S.[2]

An electrical contractor is a person whose business includes the electrical trade field and who has the experience, knowledge, and skill to install, repair, alter, add to, or design, in compliance with law, electrical wiring, fixtures, and appliances, and any related part, which generates, transmits, or uses electrical energy, in compliance with applicable plans, specifications, codes, laws, and regulations.[3] The term "electrical contractor" also includes any person, firm, or corporation that engages in the business of electrical contracting under an expressed or implied contract or that undertakes, offers to undertake, or submits a bid to engage in the business of alarm contracting.[4]

An alarm system is any electrical device, signaling device, or combination of electrical devices used to signal or detect a burglary, fire, robbery, or medical emergency.[5] Licensure of electrical and alarm systems contractors is required, and applicants must have sufficient technical experience and be tested on technical and business matters.

An alarm system contractor is a person whose business includes the execution of contracts requiring the ability, experience, science, knowledge, and skill to conduct all alarm services for compensation, for all types of alarm systems for all purposes.[6] The term "alarm system contractor" also includes any person, firm, or corporation that engages in the business of alarm contracting under an expressed or implied contract, or that undertakes, offers to undertake, or submits a bid to engage in the business of alarm contracting.[7]

An alarm system contractor whose business includes all types of alarm systems for all purposes is designated as an "alarm system contractor I, including fire alarm systems;" the practice area of an "alarm system contractor II" is identical except that it does not include fire alarm systems.[8]

The terms "registered alarm system contractor," and "registered electrical contractor" mean those contractors who have registered with the DBPR and met competency requirements for their trade category in the particular jurisdiction for which the registration is issued. Registered contractors may contract only in the jurisdiction for which the registration is issued.[9]
The term "certification" means the act by a contractor obtaining or holding a geographically unlimited certificate of competency from the DBPR.[10] When an alarm system contractor is certified, the contractor possesses a certificate of competency, with some limitations as to the

[1] *See* s. 489.501, F.S.
[2] Section 489.507, F.S.
[3] *See* s. 489.505(12), F.S.
[4] *Id*.
[5] Section 489.505(1), F.S.
[6] *See* s. 489.505(2), F.S.
[7] *Id.*
[8] *Id.*
[9] *See* ss. 489.505(16), (21), and (22), F.S.
[10] *See* ss. 489.505(4), (5), and (6), F.S.

scope of work that may be undertaken, without any mandatory licensure requirement.[11] The term "certified electrical contractor" means an electrical contractor who possesses a certificate of competency. To be certified a person must be 18 years of age, pass the certification examination, be of good moral character, and meet the eligibility requirements of s. 489.511(1)(b)3., F.S.[12]

Unless an exemption applies, the term "contracting" means engaging in business as a contractor or performing electrical or alarm work for compensation and includes, but is not limited to, performance of the work that may be performed by electrical or alarm system contractors.[13] The attempted sale of contracting services and the negotiation or bid for a contract on these services also constitutes contracting. If the services offered require licensure or agent qualification, the offering, negotiation for a bid, or attempted sale of these services requires the corresponding licensure.[14]

The term "specialty contractor" means a contractor whose scope of practice is limited to a specific category of electrical or alarm system contracting, such as residential electrical contracting, maintenance of electrical fixtures, and fabrication, erection, installation, and maintenance of electrical advertising signs.[15]

Section 489.514, F.S., authorizes the ECLB to grandfather certain applicants for registered contract status, but only if application was made before November 1, 2021; under this provision, which now appears obsolete, the ECLB is required to certify an electrical, electrical specialty, or alarm system contractor to engage in the specified trade category throughout the state, upon:

- Receipt of a completed application;
- Payment of the appropriate fee;[16] and
- Evidence that he or she qualifies for the certification in a trade category based on:
  - Having a valid registered local license;
  - Passing an approved written examination;
  - Having a minimum of five years' contracting experience in the applicable trade category (with an active license and excluding probationary periods);

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[11] *See* s. 489.505(7), F.S., which describes the limitations on the scope of a certificate of competency as those circuits originating in alarm control panels, equipment governed by the Articles 725, 760, 770, 800, and 810 of the National Electrical Code, Current Edition, and National Fire Protection Association Standard 72, Current Edition, as well as the installation, repair, fabrication, erection, alteration, addition, or design of electrical wiring, fixtures, appliances, thermostats, apparatus, raceways, and conduit, or any part thereof not to exceed 98 volts (RMS), when those items are for the purpose of transmitting data or proprietary video (satellite systems that are not part of a community antenna television or radio distribution system) or providing central vacuum capability or electric locks. RMS is an acronym for "root mean square," a statistical term defined as the square root of mean square, or effective voltage. *See* http://www.learningaboutelectronics.com/Articles/RMS-voltage-and-current-explained.php#:~:text=RMS%20Voltage%20and%20Current-%20Explained.%20RMS,%20or%20root,power%20dissipation,%20in%20circuit,%20as%20this%20AC%20voltage. (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).

[12] Section 489.511(1(b)3., F.S., provides experience requirements for certification.

[13] *See* s. 489.505(9), F.S.; *see also*, ss. 489.505(2) and (12), F.S., for the various services that may be performed, and ss. 489.503(1) through (24), F.S., for the persons and types of work that are exempted from the term "contracting."

[14] *See* s. 489.505(9), F.S.

[15] *See* s. 489.505(19), F.S.

[16] The ECLB has established a $196 fee for applications for registered contractor certification. *See* s. 489.109, F.S., and Fla. Admin. Code R. ch. 61G6-8.

- Never having had a contractor's license revoked, and during the last five years, not having had a suspended license or been assessed a fine in excess of $500; and
- Meeting all required insurance and financial responsibility requirements.[17]

Mandatory Disclosure of Contractor Registration or Certification Numbers

Under s. 489.521(7), F.S., each registered or certified contractor must state the appropriate registration or certification number on each building permit application and each issued and recorded building permit. All city and county building departments must require, as a condition for building permit issuance, that the contractor applying for the permit verify his or her registration or certification as an electrical or alarm system contractor in the state.[18]

A contractor's registration or certification number must also be stated in each offer of services, business proposal, or advertisement, regardless of medium, used by that contractor; however, the term "advertisement" does not include business stationery or promotional novelties such as balloons, pencils, trinkets, or articles of clothing; this requirement does not apply to a newspaper, magazine, flyer, billboard, phone book, Internet, or broadcast advertisement for alarm system contracting as long as the contractor maintains a website that includes the number and the advertisement directs consumers to the website.[19]

The ECLB must assess a fine of not less than $100 or issue a citation to any contractor who fails to include that contractor's certification or registration number when submitting an advertisement for publication, broadcast, or printing.[20] In addition, a person who claims in any advertisement to be a certified or registered contractor, but who does not hold a valid state certification or registration, commits a misdemeanor of the second degree.[21]

Fire Alarm Systems Agents; Licensing; Continuing Education Requirements

Section 489.505(28), F.S., defines "fire alarm system agent" as a person:

- Who is employed by a licensed fire alarm contractor or certified unlimited electrical contractor;
- Who is performing duties that are part of fire alarm system contracting requiring certification; and
- Whose specific duties include any of the following: altering, installing, maintaining, moving, repairing, replacing, servicing, selling, or monitoring a fire alarm system for compensation.

The provisions of s. 489.5185, F.S., include the requirements for fire alarm system agents, who may not be employed unless the person is at least 18 years of age, provides proof of a minimum of 14 hours of initial training, has not been convicted of a crime within the last three years

[17] *See* s. 489.515(1)(b), F.S., which provides that an applicant must submit satisfactory evidence of workers' compensation insurance or an acceptable exemption issued by the DBPR, public liability and property damage insurance in amounts determined by the ECLB, and evidence of financial responsibility, credit, and business reputation of either the contractor or the business sought to be qualified for certification.
[18] *See* s. 553.521(7)(a), F.S.
[19] *See* s. 553.521(7)(b), F.S.
[20] *Id*.
[21] As to a misdemeanor of the second degree, s. 775.082, F.S., provides such offense is punishable by a term of imprisonment not to exceed 60 days, and s. 775.083, F.S., provides such offense is punishable by a fine not to exceed $500.

(related to the business of fire alarms), has a background check, and has not been convicted of a crime for controlled substances within the last three years.

The initial training for a fire alarm system agent must include basic fire alarm system technology in addition to related training in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes and standards and access control training, with at least 2 hours of training in the prevention of false alarms.

A certified electrical contractor, a certified fire alarm system contractor, a registered fire alarm system contractor, a journeyman electrician licensed by any local jurisdiction, or an alarm technician licensed by a local jurisdiction that requires an examination and experience or training as licensure qualifications, is not required to complete the training required for fire alarm system agents, and a registered electrical contractor is not required to complete that training, provided he or she is only doing electrical work up to the alarm panel.[22]

Section 489.5185(2)(c), F.S., provides that a nonsupervising employee working as a helper or apprentice under the direct, onsite, continuous supervision of a certified or registered electrical contractor, a certified or registered fire alarm system contractor, a journeyman electrician licensed by any local jurisdiction, an alarm technician licensed by a local jurisdiction that requires an examination and experience or training as licensure qualifications, or a qualified fire alarm system agent, is not required to complete any fire alarm system training and is not required to be 18 years of age or older. Persons who perform only monitoring[23] are not required to complete the training required for fire alarm system agents.

Each fire alarm system agent must receive six hours of continuing education on fire alarm system installation and repair and false alarm prevention every two years, from a board-approved sponsor of training and through a board-approved training course.[24] Failure to comply with any of the provisions of s. 489.5185, F.S., is grounds for disciplinary action against the contractor as set forth in s. 489.533, F.S.[25]

Alarm system contractors may also hold certificates of competency from the DBPR, which are geographically unlimited.[26] Holders of those certificates are certified alarm system contractors, and the scope of certification is limited to specific alarm circuits and equipment.[27] There is no mandatory licensure requirement created by the availability of certification.[28]

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[22] *See* Section 489.5185(2), F.S.
[23] *See supra* note 15.
[24] *See* Section 489.5185(5), F.S.
[25] *See* Section 489.5185(6), F.S.
[26] Sections 489.505(4) and 489.505(5), F.S.,
[27] Section 489.505(7), F.S., describes the limitations as those circuits originating in alarm control panels, equipment governed by the Articles 725, 760, 770, 800, and 810 of the National Electrical Code, Current Edition, and National Fire Protection Association Standard 72, Current Edition, as well as the installation, repair, fabrication, erection, alteration, addition, or design of electrical wiring, fixtures, appliances, thermostats, apparatus, raceways, and conduit, or any part thereof not to exceed 98 volts (RMS), when those items are for the purpose of transmitting data or proprietary video (satellite systems that are not part of a community antenna television or radio distribution system) or providing central vacuum capability or electric locks.
[28] *Id.*

National Institute of Certification in Engineering Technologies

The National Institute of Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET), established in 1961, certifies engineering technicians and technologists, and more than 148,000 technicians and technologists have received NICET certification since then.[29] Certification programs include those for:[30]

- Fire Alarm Systems;
- Inspection and Testing of Fire Alarm Systems;
- Inspection and Testing of Water-based Systems;
- Special Hazards Systems; and
- Water-based Systems Layout.

Certification requirements exist for four levels of Fire Alarm System (FAS) certification[31] and two levels of Inspection and Testing of Fire Alarm Systems (I&TFAS) certification.[32]

For a Level II Fire Alarm System certification, a person must:[33]

- Pass Level I and Level II exams;
- Meet all Levels I and II performance measures; and
- Have at least two years of fire detection and signaling systems experience, which must include at least 12 months of fire alarm systems experience, including alarm and detection, notification, sprinkler monitoring, and interfaces and controls for agent releasing suppression systems.

For a Level II Inspection and Testing of Fire Alarm Systems certification, a person must:[34]

- Pass Level 1 and Level II exam; and
- Meet all Levels I and II performance measures; and
- Have at least 18 months of experience in the inspection and testing of fire alarm and suppression systems.

Recertification is required every three years, by demonstrating continuing professional development.[35]

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[29] *See* NICET, *About Us*, https://www.nicet.org/about-us/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[30] *See* NICET, *Certification Programs*, at https://www.nicet.org/certification-programs/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[31] *See* NICET, *Certification Programs, Fire Alarm Systems*, at https://www.nicet.org/certification-programs/electrical-and-mechanical-systems/fire-alarm-systems/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[32] *See* NICET, *Certification Programs, FAS Exams and I&TFAS Exam Credits*, at https://www.nicet.org/certification-programs/electrical-and-mechanical-systems/inspection-and-testing-of-fire-alarm-systems/fas-exams-and-i-tfas-exam-credits/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[33] *See* NICET, *Certification Requirements*, https://www.nicet.org/certification-programs/electrical-and-mechanical-systems/fire-alarm-systems/certification-requirements/ (last visited on Jan. 12, 2022).
[34] *See* NICET, *Certification Requirements*, https://www.nicet.org/certification-programs/electrical-and-mechanical-systems/inspection-and-testing-of-fire-alarm-systems/certification-requirements/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[35] *See* NICET, *Recertify*, https://www.nicet.org/recertify/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).

Electronic Security Association

The Electronic Security Association (ESA), established in 1948 to represent the electronic security and life safety industry, asserts it is the largest trade association in the United States, with more than 500,000 industry professionals employed by ESA member companies.[36]

Certification programs include:[37]
- Certified Alarm Technician Level I;
- Certified Fire Alarm Technician Level II Fire;
- Certified Fire Alarm Designer Level III Fire; and
- Certified Residential Fire Alarm Inspector.

For certification as a Fire Alarm Technician Level II Fire, a person must:[38]
- Be certified as an ESA Alarm Technician Level I or higher;
- Have 24 months of work history or have been certified as an ESA Alarm Technician Level I for 24 months or more; and
- Have completed the following two courses within the previous five years:
  - Fire Alarm Installation Methods course and pass the examination.
  - Life Safety Code course or International Building Code course and passed the associated examination.

For certification as a Fire Alarm Designer Technician Level III, a person must:[39]
- Be certified as an ESA Fire Alarm Technician Level II;
- Have 60 months of work history in the field of fire alarms installation, inspection, testing, commissioning, project managing, plan preparation, or supervision;
- Have a personal recommendation from a professional with the professionalism, ethical standards, and technical abilities of the applicant (e.g., from licensed engineers, registered land surveyors, certified fire engineers/designers); and
- Have completed the Fire Alarm Designer course and passed the associated examination.

Recertification is required every two years, by completing 24 hours of continuing education approved by the ESA and other continuing education that may qualify.[40]

The Florida Building Code

The Florida Building Code (building code) is the unified building code applicable to the design, construction, erection, alteration, modification, repair, or demolition of public or private

[36] *See* ESA, *About Us*, https://esaweb.org/about/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[37] *See* ESA, *ESA Certifications for Security, Sales and Fire*, https://esaweb.org/training/certifications/certification-types/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[38] ESA, *ESA Certified Fire Alarm Technician Level 2 (CFAT)*, https://esaweb.org/training/certifications/cfat/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[39] ESA, *Certified Fire Alarm Designer (CFAD) Level III Fire Certification*, https://esaweb.org/training/certifications/cfad/ (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[40] ESA, *How to Renew Your ESA Certification*, https://esaweb.org/training/certification-renewal/#qualifying (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).

buildings, structures, and facilities in the state.[41] The building code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently throughout the state.[42] The building code is adopted, updated, interpreted, and maintained by the Florida Building Commission (commission), which is housed within the DBPR, but is enforced by authorized state and local government agencies.[43] The commission adopts an updated building code every three years through review of codes published by the International Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association.[44]

Violations of the building code are enforced by the appropriate enforcing agency or local government pursuant to s. 553.79, F.S., relating to required permits, and s. 553.80, F.S., relating to enforcement of the building code. Each local government and each legally constituted enforcement district with statutory authority must regulate building construction and, if authorized in legislation, each state agency, must enforce the building code by seeking injunctive relief from any court to address noncompliance with the building code.[45]

Fire Alarm Permit Applications to Local Enforcement Agencies

Under Section 553.7921, F.S., a uniform fire alarm permit application with specified supporting documentation must be filed before installing or replacing a fire alarm, or repairing an existing alarm system, if the local enforcement authority requires a plan review before conducting these activities. The uniform fire alarm permit application must be accompanied by specified supporting documentation, must be signed by the owner or an authorized representative, and the contractor or the contractor's agent, and may be filed electronically or by facsimile.[46]

Low-voltage Alarm System Projects

Section 553.793, F.S., relating to streamlined low-voltage alarm system installation permitting, provides that a "low-voltage alarm system project" is a project related to the installation, maintenance, inspection, replacement, or service of a new or existing alarm system that is hardwired and operating at low voltage, or a new or existing low-voltage electric fence. The term includes ancillary attached equipment, including but not limited to, home-automation equipment, thermostats, closed-circuit television systems, access controls, battery recharging devices, and video cameras. If the installation or replacement of a fire alarm requires a plan review by the local building code enforcement agency, streamlined permitting may not be used.[47]

[41] *See* s. 553.72, F.S. Part IV of ch. 553, F.S., cited as the "Florida Building Codes Act." *See* s. 553.70, F.S. The Florida Building Code, 7th Edition, is available at https://www.floridabuilding.org/bc/bc_default.aspx (last visited Jan. 12, 2022).
[42] *See* s. 553.72(1), F.S.
[43] *See* s. 553.72(3), F.S.
[44] *See* s. 553.73(7), F.S., which requires review of the International Building Code, the International Fuel Gas Code, the International Existing Building Code, the International Mechanical Code, the International Plumbing Code, and the International Residential Code, all of which are copyrighted and published by the International Code Council, and the National Electrical Code, which is copyrighted and published by the National Fire Protection Association.
[45] *See* s. 553.83, F.S.
[46] *See* s. 553.7921, F.S., which sets forth the Uniform Fire Alarm Permit Application.
[47] *See* s. 553.793(4), F.S.

Under streamlined permitting, licensed electrical and alarm system contractors are authorized to purchase uniform basic permit labels for low-voltage alarm system projects[48] from local governments by submitting identification of the contractor and proof of the contractor's registration or certification as a licensed contractor, without any other project information about a project.[49]

Contractors may purchase labels in bulk for one or more unspecified current or future projects, although the labels are valid only for one year and may be used only in the jurisdiction of the local government issuing the labels.[50] Local governments may not charge more than $40 per permit label per project per unit, and may not require any other charge associated with the installation or replacement of a new or existing hardwired, low-voltage alarm system project.

Licensed electrical and alarm system contractors are not required to notify a local government before working on a low-voltage alarm system project, but first must post an unused permit label in a conspicuous place on the premises.[51] Within 14 days after completion of the project, the contractor must submit a Uniform Notice of a Low Voltage Alarm System Project to the local government; a local enforcement government may take disciplinary action against a contractor who fails to timely submit the required notice.[52]

A local enforcement agency may coordinate directly with the property owner or customer for inspection of a low-voltage alarm system project, and if a project fails an inspection, the contractor must take corrective action in order to pass the inspection.[53]

Another permit label is not required for any subsequent maintenance, inspection, or service of a low-voltage alarm system project that was initially permitted using the streamlined permitting process.[54]

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 of the bill amends s. 489.5185, F.S., relating to firm alarm system agents, to reduce the number of required initial training hours and continuing education hours required for fire alarm system agents holding certain certifications. The requirement of 14 hours of initial training hours is reduced to two hours of board-approved training in the prevention of false alarms, if a person holds a current:

- National Institute of Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET) Level II certification or higher in Fire Alarm Systems or Inspection and Testing of Fire Alarm Systems;
- Electronic Security Association (ESA) Certified Fire Alarm Technician certification; or
- ESA Certified Fire Alarm Designer certification.

[48] Section 553.793(2), F.S., provides that permits are not required to install, maintain, inspect, replace, or service a wire alarm system or its components or attachments.
[49] *See* s. 553.793(5), F.S.
[50] *See* ss. 553.80 and 553.83, F.S.
[51] *See* ss. 553.793(6) and (7), F.S.
[52] *See* s. 553.793(7), F.S.
[53] *See* s. 553.793(9), F.S.
[54] *See* s. 553.791(11), F.S.

Under the bill, the requirement of six hours of board-approved continuing education every two years on fire alarm system installation and repair and false alarm prevention is also reduced for persons holding the above certifications, with such persons required to complete only two hours of continuing education prevention of false alarms every two years.

Section 2 of the bill provides a low-voltage alarm system project includes closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems used to signal or detect a burglary, fire, robbery, or medical emergency. A CCTV system (i.e., video surveillance) transmits a signal to another location, but unlike broadcast television, the signal is sent via a closed circuit and not openly transmitted.[55] Currently, the definition of low-voltage alarm system project in s. 553.793(1)(b), F.S., includes CCTV systems only as ancillary components or equipment attached to a low-voltage alarm system project.

Section 3 of the bill creates s. 553.7932, F.S., to establish a simplified permitting process for certain limited fire alarm system alterations. The bill provides:

- The term "contractor" means a person qualified to engage in electrical or alarm system contracting pursuant to a certificate or registration issued by the DBPR under part II of ch. 489, F.S.
- The term "fire alarm system project" means a fire alarm system alteration of a total of 20 or fewer initiating devices and notification devices, or the installation or replacement of a fire communicator connected to an existing fire alarm control panel in an existing commercial, residential, apartment, cooperative, or cooperative building.
- A local enforcement agency:
  - May require a contractor to submit a completed application and payment, as a condition of obtaining a permit for an eligible fire alarm system project;
  - May not require a contractor to submit plans or specifications as a condition of obtaining a permit for an eligible fire alarm system project;
  - Must issue a permit for an eligible fire alarm system project in person or electronically;
  - Must require at least one inspection of an eligible fire alarm system project to ensure compliance with applicable codes and standards; if an eligible fire alarm system project fails an inspection, the contractor must take corrective action as necessary to pass inspection.
- A contractor must keep a copy of the plans and specifications at a fire alarm system project worksite and make them available to the inspector at each inspection.

The bill is effective July 1, 2022.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

[55] *See* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Closed-circuit_television (last visited Jan. 12, 2022). The term "closed circuit television" is not defined in Florida law.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

According to the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), the expenditures will be reduced for initial training and continuing education by applicants and licensees (with the required certifications) who seek or renew a fire alarm system agent license.[56] Further, the expedited permitting process for fire alarm system alterations may reduce the time and cost involved for such permits.[57]

C. Government Sector Impact:

According to the DBPR, local governments may experience increased expenditures to administer the required expedited permitting process created by the bill, but the amount cannot be determined at this time.[58]

The DBPR also notes that the Florida Building Commission must initiate rulemaking for:

- The regulation of closed circuit television systems used to signal or detect a burglary, fire, robbery, or medical emergency as low-voltage alarm systems projects; and
- The new expedited permitting process for eligible fire alarm system alarms.[59]

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

[56] *See* Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *2022 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis for HB 669 (identical to SB 994)* at 4 (Nov. 29, 2021) (on file with the Senate Committee on Regulated Industries).
[57] *Id*.
[58] *Id*. at 3.
[59] *Id*. at 6.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 489.5185 and 553.793.

This bill creates section 553.7932 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Regulated Industries Committee on January 18, 2022:
The committee substitute:

- Clarifies that the term "low-voltage alarm system project" includes ancillary components or equipment attached to a low-voltage alarm system or low-voltage electric fence.
- Significantly revises the simplified permitting process for eligible fire alarm system projects, to include:
  - Expanding the fire alarm system projects eligible for simplified permitting to include certain existing residential and cooperative buildings;
  - Providing that a local enforcement agency:
    1. May require a contractor to submit a completed application and payment, as a condition of obtaining a permit for an eligible fire alarm system project;
    2. May not require a contractor to submit plans or specifications as a condition of obtaining a permit for an eligible fire alarm system project;
    3. Must issue a permit for an eligible fire alarm system project in person or electronically;
    4. Must require at least one inspection of an eligible fire alarm system project to ensure compliance with applicable codes and standards;

- Requires a contractor, if an eligible fire alarm system project fails an inspection, to take corrective action as necessary to pass inspection; and
- Requires a contractor to keep a copy of the plans and specifications at the project worksite and make them available to the inspector at each inspection.

B. Amendments:

None.