

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5768

As Passed Senate, March 13, 1995

Title: An act relating to deductions from unemployment benefits for unavailability.

Brief Description: Revising provision relating to deductions from unemployment benefits for unavailability.

Sponsors: Senator Pelz; by request of Employment Security Department.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Trade: 2/16/95, 2/20/95 [DPA].
Passed Senate, 3/13/95, 25-23.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & TRADE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Pelz, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Franklin, Fraser and Wojahn.

Staff: Patrick Woods (786-7430)

Background: Currently, an unemployment insurance claimant who is unavailable or unable to work for one or two days has his or her benefit check reduced by 1/7th or 2/7ths respectively. In addition, a claimant that is unavailable or unable to work for three or more days is denied benefits for that week. Claimants are only expected to be available for work during the normal work week for their occupation.

The Employment Security Department considers the 1/7th and 2/7ths reductions to be time consuming and administratively burdensome.

Summary of Bill: The requirement that reduces an individual's unemployment insurance benefits by 1/7th or 2/7ths when they are unavailable for work on one or two days during the week is removed. The act applies to weeks of unemployment ending after July 7, 1995.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The bill will reduce the administrative burden on the department and streamline the UI system which is a recommendation of the 1993/94 UI Task Force.

Testimony Against: The bill will expand the payment of benefits to individuals that are not seeking employment for two days a week.

Testified: Jeff Johnson, WSLC, AFL-CIO (pro); Clif Finch, AWB (con).