

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2438

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor*

Title: An act relating to unemployment insurance for persons reentering the work force.

Brief Description: Providing unemployment insurance for persons reentering the work force.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Heavey, Prentice, Franklin, R. King, Jones, G. Cole, Basich and J. Kohl.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor, February 6, 1992, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE & LABOR**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 7 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; G. Cole, Vice Chair; Franklin; Jones; O'Brien; Prentice; and Vance.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 3 members: Representatives Fuhrman, Ranking Minority Member; Lisk, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; and Wilson.

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7117).

Background: To be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits, a claimant must have worked at least 680 hours in his or her base year - the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters preceding his or her application for benefits. For claimants who have left work because of temporary total disability resulting from a work-related injury or a crime victim injury, a special base year may be established that consists of the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the start of the disability. This special base year allows the claimant to use wage credits that were earned before the disability began. However, the claimant must use the wage credits within six years of the start of the disability.

Persons who have experienced a long absence from the work force for reasons other than a work-related or crime victim-

related disability generally will be unable to qualify for benefits while they are searching for a new job.

Summary of Substitute Bill: New unemployment insurance eligibility requirements are established for persons who are reentering the work force after an absence resulting from temporary total disability because of a nonwork-related injury or illness. These claimants are allowed to establish a special base year using the wage credits that were earned in the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters before the start of the disability. The claimant may file an application for benefits at any time after beginning to seek suitable employment, but the wage credits must be used within six years of reentering the work force.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute permits the worker to file a claim after he or she begins seeking suitable employment, rather than full-time employment.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: None.