

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1653

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

Title: An act relating to partners in education.

Brief Description: Authorizing release time for partners in education.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Pruitt, Peery and Dellwo.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor, March 5, 1991, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE & LABOR**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1653 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 7 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; Cole, Vice Chair; Franklin; Jones; R. King; O'Brien; and Prentice.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 4 members: Representatives Fuhrman, Ranking Minority Member; Lisk, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Vance; and Wilson.

Staff: Jill Teutsch (786-7623).

Background: Although state law encourages employers to offer employees periodic opportunities to visit schools during working hours, state law does not currently require employers to provide leave time for employees to perform school services.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Employers employing a daily average of 100 or more during the previous calendar quarter must provide each employee with 60 hours of school service leave per year. An employee is entitled to take no more than eight hours school service leave in any one week. School service consists of duties arising from service as the executive officer of a parent-teacher organization, a member of a school-based committee, or a member of a school board or the state board of education. The leave may be unpaid, but the employer may not reduce the employee's benefits accrued as of the date the leave commenced. The

employer may limit school service release time to designated key personnel (up to 10 percent of the work force).

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill increases from 25 to 100 the minimum number of employees an employer must employ to fall under the bill. Whereas the original bill suggested that school service leave was to be paid, in the substitute bill, school service leave may be unpaid, but benefits may not be reduced. School service "release time" is renamed school service "leave."

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: School service leave is a necessary provision for the successful implementation of many school restructuring programs. School service leave would help encourage the formation of partnerships between the schools, businesses and the community.

Testimony Against: School service leave adds to current leave provisions that are inconsistent and cumbersome for employers to implement.

Witnesses: Representative Wes Pruitt, prime sponsor; Bob Maier, Washington Education Association (in favor); and Clif Finch, Association of Washington Businesses (in opposition).