

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 2390

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to clarifications in the organizational structure of the department of labor and industries specific to current departmental functions and responsibilities.

Brief Description: Clarifying statutes to reflect the organizational structure of the department of labor and industries.

Sponsors: Representatives Finkbeiner, Heavey, Lisk, Chandler, Long, Forner, Conway, Johanson, Jones, Eide and Roland; by request of Department of Labor & Industries.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor, February 4, 1994, DPA;
Passed House, February 14, 1994, 95-0;
Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; G. Cole, Vice Chair; Lisk, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Conway; Horn; King; Springer and Veloria.

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7117).

Background: The statute creating the Department of Labor and Industries specifies five divisions within the department: Industrial Insurance, Industrial Safety and Health, Industrial Relations, Apprenticeship, and Building and Construction Safety Inspection Services. Four of the five divisions are to be headed by assistant directors who have authority, with approval of the director, to employ necessary staff. Although the department has changed its organization over the years, the statute has not been amended since 1974.

During 1993, the department began a reorganization that has resulted in four divisions and six regions. The four divisions are Consultation and Compliance Services, Administrative Services, Research and Information Services, and Insurance Services.

Before 1921, an industrial welfare commission was responsible for reviewing and investigating working conditions in the state. In 1921, these duties were transferred to the industrial welfare committee, composed of the director of the Department of Labor and Industries, the supervisor of industrial insurance, the supervisor of industrial relations, and the supervisor of women in industry. The industrial welfare committee was abolished in 1982 and the duties transferred to the director of the Department of Labor and Industries. References to the industrial welfare committee remain in the statute.

Summary of Bill: The requirement that the Department of Labor and Industries be divided into five divisions is deleted. A requirement is added that the department must be organized into divisions that promote efficient and effective performance of the agency's duties.

Other references to the five named divisions are deleted. References to duties to be performed under the divisions are changed to refer to the performance of duties delegated by the director of the department and by statute. References to the heads of the five named divisions as "assistant directors" are deleted and their authority to hire necessary staff is transferred to the director.

References to the industrial welfare committee are changed to refer to the director or the Department of Labor and Industries, with the director or the department having the responsibility over wages and working conditions that had been held by the committee.

Provisions are repealed that refer to meetings of the industrial welfare committee, that establish requirements to furnish information to the committee, and that establish an appeal process to the committee for persons aggrieved by a decision of the department.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The Department of Labor and Industries is requesting this bill as a housekeeping measure. There is no substantive change in the scope of the department's responsibilities or authority.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Mike Watson, Department of Labor and Industries.