

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5466

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE, MARCH 3, 1993

Brief Description: Regulating unemployment insurance for people reentering the work force.

SPONSORS: Senators Prentice, Moore, McAuliffe and Fraser

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5466 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Moore, Chairman; Prentice, Vice Chairman; Fraser, McAuliffe, Pelz, Sutherland, Vognild, and Wojahn.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Amondson, Barr, Cantu, Newhouse, and Prince.

Staff: Patrick Woods (786-7430)

Hearing Dates: February 17, 1993; March 3, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Currently, an individual that has suffered a temporary total disability which is compensable under the state's industrial insurance or crime victims compensation laws is granted unemployment insurance benefits. Benefits may only be provided when the individual is able to return to work and is actively seeking employment.

SUMMARY:

The existing statutory provisions granting unemployment benefits to individuals that have suffered a temporary total disability which is compensable under the state's industrial insurance or crime victims compensation laws is modified. In addition, the following individuals may also receive unemployment benefits: 1) individuals who are reentering the work force after a temporary career disruption due to participation in a retraining program, or 2) individuals that are reentering the work force after a temporary career disruption due to domestic reasons.

Individuals that are eligible to receive unemployment benefits under the provisions of this act are required to make an application within 26 weeks of termination from the last employer.

The eligible individual's 52-week benefit year is established from the week in which the individual filed an application with the department.

A severability clause regarding conflicts with federal unemployment insurance requirements is provided.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Technical changes are made. The commencement of an individual's benefit year is modified from the week of application to the week of reentering the workforce.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Providing unemployment benefits to individuals that have left work for training or domestic responsibilities and are now seeking employment is a worthwhile use of unemployment insurance funds.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

This is an expanded use of unemployment benefits and will have an adverse fiscal impact on the unemployment trust fund.

TESTIFIED: Jeff Johnson, WSLC, AFL-CIO (pro); Gary Smith, Independent Business Association (con); Clif Finch, AWB (con); Norm Raffaell, AWB, Weyerhaeuser Company (con)