

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 6232

As Passed Senate, February 11, 2000

Title: An act relating to industrial insurance premiums for employers with drug-free workplace programs.

Brief Description: Evaluating drug-free workplace programs.

Sponsors: Senators Fairley, Oke, Hochstatter and Rasmussen; by request of Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Department of Labor & Industries and Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Workforce Development: 1/11/2000, 2/3/2000 [DPA]. Passed Senate, 2/11/2000, 44-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Hochstatter, Kline, Oke and Wojahn.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7667)

Background: The Legislature passed legislation in 1996 allowing a 5 percent discount on industrial insurance premiums to employers that establish drug-free workplace programs designed to reduce on-the job injuries. Under the programs, employers must require substance abuse tests of job applicants and workers involved in job-related injuries. Employers must also provide an employee assistance program, employee education and supervisor training.

The Department of Labor and Industries was required to conduct two evaluations of the programs: one on their effect on workplace safety and the state's industrial insurance fund; and the other to determine costs and benefits. The department was to issue a final comprehensive report on each evaluation last year. The department believes that the program has not been operating long enough to provide adequate data collection for a cost-benefit analysis.

Summary of Bill: The expiration date for the department's drug-free workplace premium discount program is changed from January 1, 2001 to January 1, 2004. The department must conduct a cost-benefit evaluation of the program in consultation with the Department of Social and Health Services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This is a good bill. It will continue the drug-free workplace premium discount program so that it can be studied by UW researchers to see if there is any effect on workplace safety.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Suzanne Mager, Gary Franklin, Labor & Industry; Ken Stark, Henry Gohert, Department of Social and Health Services.