

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2392

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to transferring service credit and contributions into the Washington state patrol retirement system by members who served as commercial vehicle enforcement officers and who became commissioned officers in the Washington state patrol after July 1, 2000, and prior to June 30, 2001.

Brief Description: Transferring service credit and contributions into the Washington state patrol retirement system.

Sponsors: Representatives Delvin, Doumit, Alexander, Morell, Eickmeyer, Linville, Lovick, Haigh and Esser; by request of Joint Committee on Pension Policy.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 1/24/02, 2/5/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officers within the Washington State Patrol who elected to become commissioned officers between July 1, 2000, and June 30, 2001, the opportunity to purchase Washington State Patrol Retirement System service credit for that period currently covered by Public Employees' Retirement System Plan 2.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 23 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Doumit, 1st Vice Chair; Fromhold, 2nd Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Buck, Clements, Cody, Cox, Dunshee, Grant, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, Lisk, McIntire, Pearson, Pflug, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Talcott and Tokuda.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Boldt.

Staff: Andrea Hardy (786-7349).

Background:

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officers (CVEOs) are considered "special deputies," and are appointed by the Chief of the Washington State Patrol (WSP). The CVEOs are "limited authority" officers who have enforcement duties in the arena of commercial vehicles and school bus or private carrier buses. Their primary function is to inspect private commercial vehicles and school buses, ensuring that regulations regarding vehicle weight, size, and licensure are appropriate and in compliance with state law. Because they are limited authority officers they are not commissioned and, therefore, are not members of the Washington State Patrol Retirement System (WSPRS). Instead, they are members of the Public Employees Retirement System Plan 2 (PERS 2).

There are two types of CVEOs: those who are at fixed scales and are unarmed, and those who carry arms and are responsible for a particular jurisdiction rather than a fixed location. The 2000 Supplemental Transportation Budget appropriated funds allowing up to 30 CVEOs to complete the WSP Academy training and become commissioned officers. As commissioned officers, they are automatically members of WSPRS. This means that, although their past service is currently in PERS 2, all future service credit earned by these commissioned officers will be earned within the WSPRS.

Summary of Bill:

The CVEO members of PERS 2 who chose to take additional WSP Academy training and become fully commissioned officers are provided the option to leave earlier service credit and contributions in PERS 2 and receive benefits in both PERS 2 and WSPRS, or to transfer their contributions and service credit earned as CVEOs to WSPRS. If the officer elects to transfer all service credit and contributions to WSPRS, the officer must pay the difference between employee and employer contributions made to PERS 2 and those which would have been paid to WSPRS, inclusive of interest.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill is very tightly written and affects only about two dozen people. When CVEOs were provided the option to take training and become commissioned officers, they were promised that an effort would be made to afford them an opportunity to transfer their prior service credit in PERS to LEOFF 2 so that they would have a consistent benefit. The officers who took the training fulfilled a critical need because they were asked to do so. That said, they should not be left as dual members if they want to transfer and have all service credit in LEOFF 2.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Eric Robertson, Washington State Patrol.