

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5664

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Commerce & Trade, March 5, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to uniformed personnel collective bargaining.

**Brief Description:** Modifying uniformed personnel collective bargaining provisions.

**Sponsors:** Senator Morton.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Commerce & Trade: 2/21/03, 3/5/03 [DPS, DNP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & TRADE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5664 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; and Mulliken.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Franklin and Keiser.

**Staff:** Jennifer Ziegler (786-7316)

**Background:** The Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act governs negotiations regarding personnel matters for public employees. The act applies to "uniformed personnel." "Uniformed personnel" are law enforcement officers employed by the governing body of a city or town with a population of 2,500 or more and law enforcement officers employed by the governing body of a county with a population of 10,000 or more.

The act requires employers and bargaining units to begin negotiating at least five months before the submission of the employer's budget to the appropriate legislative body. If the parties are not able to reach an agreement, an interest arbitration panel must be created to resolve the dispute. The panel consists of a representative from each party and a neutral chairman. The determination of the panel is final and binding.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** "Uniformed personnel" are law enforcement officers employed by the governing body of a county with a population of 25,000 or more.

In making its determination, the interest arbitration panel must consider the financial constraints of the governing body, the percentage change in the implicit price deflator for the preceding year, and give substantial weight to internal equity and local labor market determinations. The panel must consider the wages, hours, and working conditions of the personnel in Washington when adequate comparable employers exist in the state.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The interest arbitration panel must consider the change in the implicit price deflator for the preceding year, and give substantial weight to internal equity and local labor market considerations. The panel must consider the wages, hours and working conditions of the personnel in Washington when adequate comparable employers exist in the state. The interest arbitration panel provisions in this legislation also apply to public transportation employees.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Other governments currently consider their ability to pay when making financial decisions. Activities in small counties are mandated by the state and those counties need some leeway. Counties need the tools to do their jobs properly.

**Testimony Against:** The bill will not accomplish what the sponsor wants. Interest arbitration panels already consider the financial situation of local governments.

**Testified:** Ricky Walsh, WA State Council of Firefighters (con); Ted Hopkins, Lincoln County Commissioner (pro); Marvin Schurke, PERC.