

1548-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives McCoy, Hudgins, Conway, G. Simpson and Kenney; by request of Department of Labor & Industries)

Brief Description: Authorizing penalties for wage payment violations.

HB 1548-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds that over five thousand state residents per year file cases and complaints with the department of labor and industries alleging they have been denied payment for work they performed. The department of labor and industries currently does not have an effective means of addressing these complaints in order to ensure workers are paid the wages they are owed.

Finds that the Washington state minimum wage law and wage claim laws do not authorize adequate penalties against violators. To improve compliance, the department of labor and industries should be allowed to assess interest on back wages and impose civil penalties against employers who are found to be not in compliance with chapters 49.46 and 49.48 RCW.

Declares that an employer found to have violated any of the provisions of this act may be assessed a civil penalty of not less than one hundred dollars and not more than one thousand dollars for each violation per employee, and may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than one thousand dollars for each subsequent violation found in the citation or notice of assessment. Each day a violation occurs may constitute a separate violation.

Creates the employment standards enforcement account in the state treasury. All receipts from civil penalties assessed under chapter 49.46 RCW and chapter 49.48 RCW must be deposited in the account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the employment standards program administered by the department of labor and industries.