
Commerce & Labor Committee

HB 2255

Brief Description: Making adjustments to improve benefit equity in the unemployment insurance system.

Sponsors: Representative Conway.

Brief Summary of Bill

- States legislative findings and an intent to reinstate the requirement for liberal construction in the unemployment insurance laws and to make adjustments in the unemployment insurance system to allow improvements in benefit equity.

Hearing Date: 3/2/05

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7103).

Background:

In 2003, Washington's unemployment insurance system was modified in Second Engrossed Senate Bill 6097. Among other modifications, the bill removed a requirement that these laws be liberally construed and made various changes in benefit calculations. For example, prior to the bill, a claimant's weekly benefit amount was calculated based 4 percent of the average wages in the claimant's two quarters of the base year in which his or her wages were the highest. Beginning in January 2005, the weekly benefit amount is based on 1 percent of the claimant's annual wages.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature finds that the unemployment insurance system is falling short of its goals and intends to reinstate the requirement for liberal construction of the unemployment insurance laws and to make adjustments in the unemployment insurance system to allow improvements in benefit equity.

Rules Authority: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule-making powers of an agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.