

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1822

As Reported by House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to interest arbitration for certain general authority Washington peace officers.

Brief Description: Authorizing interest arbitration for certain general authority Washington peace officers.

Sponsors: Representatives Conway, Wood and Ormsby.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 2/10/09, 2/18/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds general authority peace officers employed by joint operating authority airports to the employees covered by binding interest arbitration under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Crouse, Moeller and Williams.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Chandler and Green.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134)

Background:

Counties, cities, and other political subdivisions and their employees bargain wages and working conditions under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). For uniformed personnel, the PECBA recognizes the public policy against strikes as a means of

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settling labor disputes. To resolve impasses over contract negotiations involving uniformed personnel, the PECBA requires binding arbitration.

Uniformed personnel include law enforcement officers in larger cities and counties, and general authority peace officers employed by certain port districts. Other employees listed as uniformed personnel include: firefighters in all cities and counties, firefighters employed by certain port districts, correctional employees in counties with a population of 70,000 or more, security forces at a nuclear power plant, and publicly employed advanced life support technicians.

Counties, cities, and port districts are authorized to own and operate airports. Two or more municipalities, acting jointly, also may own and operate airports. There are currently six joint operating authority airports in Washington: Chehalis-Centralia Airport (City of Chehalis and Lewis County), Chelan Municipal Airport (City of Chelan and Port of Chelan), Pangborn Memorial Airport (Port of Chelan and Port of Douglas County), Spokane International Airport and Felts Field (City of Spokane and Spokane County), and Yakima Air Terminal Airport (City of Yakima and Yakima County).

Summary of Bill:

The binding interest arbitration provisions of the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act are extended to general authority peace officers employed by joint operating authority airports.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Binding arbitration is key to the ability to effectively engage in collective bargaining. Without it, the airport police are left holding the bag.

In 2006 the parties could not resolve issues through collective bargaining. The parties entered into mediation, but still could not reach agreement. The airport police requested arbitration, but were told that they did not have arbitration rights. As a result, the airport implemented its best and final offer, and the airport police lost longevity pay.

There are six joint operating airport authorities in Washington, and only Spokane has a commissioned police force. The firefighters at the airport have arbitration rights.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jamie Daniels, Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs; and Clay Creek, Spokane Airport Police Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.