
Labor & Workforce Development Committee

HB 2608

Brief Description: Establishing the minimum wage for classified school employees.

Sponsors: Representatives Sells, Haigh, Reykdal, S. Hunt, Pollet, Stanford, Fey, Tarleton, Gregerson, Goodman, Ryu, Bergquist, Santos, Moscoso and Freeman.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Sets a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for classified public school employees, beginning January 1, 2015, and requires the wage rate to be adjusted for inflation beginning January each year after.

Hearing Date: 2/4/14

Staff: Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

Minimum Wage Act: Employers covered under the state Minimum Wage Act are required to pay employees age 18 or older no less than the state minimum wage rate. The state minimum wage is currently \$9.32/hour.

The state minimum wage rate must be adjusted for inflation each year. The Department of Labor and Industries (Department) calculates the adjusted rate using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), for the 12 months prior to each September 1st.

Classified School Employee Salaries: The Legislature allocates money to each school district for employee salaries and associated fringe benefits. For classified employees of the K-12 system (such as food service workers, bus drivers, classroom aides, and custodial staff), there is not a state salary allocation schedule. Each district receives an allocation for these staff based on

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historical salary allocations adjusted for any cost-of-living increases. This means that there are variations in the salary levels for classified staff from district to district. The actual salary levels for classified staff are determined through the local collective bargaining process.

Summary of Bill:

Legislative Findings and Intent: The Legislature finds no school district employee who works full time should live in poverty. Providing quality education for all children in the state requires well-qualified and dedicated school employees. Minimum wage rates are inadequate to attract or retain these employees. The Legislature intends to increase classified salary allocations as necessary to comply with its obligation to provide ample funding for classified wages required by the bill. The Legislature intends that all school districts use state and non-state funds as necessary to ensure that all classified employees receive the minimum wage rate established by the bill.

Minimum Wage: The minimum wage rate for classified school employees is set at \$15/hour beginning January 1, 2015. Beginning January 1, 2016, the minimum wage for those employees will be adjusted by the Department for inflation using the CPI-W.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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