

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6005

As Reported by House Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections

Title: An act relating to eliminating the position of human resources director.

Brief Description: Eliminating the position of human resources director.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Governmental Operations (originally sponsored by Senators Roach and Hasegawa; by request of Office of Financial Management).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations & Elections: 2/19/14, 2/25/14 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Eliminates statutory references to the Human Resources Director and transfers nearly all of its authority and functions to the Director of the Office of Financial Management (OFM), or the OFM Director's designee.
- Transfers the Human Resource Director's authority to adopt procedures for implementation of certain medical expense reimbursement benefit plans to the Health Care Authority.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives S. Hunt, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Christian, Kretz, Manweller, Orwall, Robinson and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jasmine Vasavada (786-7301).

Background:

The Legislature reorganized central service agencies in 2011, eliminating the Department of Personnel, dividing its powers and duties between the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the Department of Enterprise Services, and creating the Human Resources

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Director in the OFM. The Human Resources Director has several administrative functions, including assisting in setting state employee compensation, salaries, and benefits. The Human Resources Director is classified as an "executive state officer" for purposes of the requirement to file certain campaign disclosure and contribution statements.

The Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association (VEBA) Trust provides eligible public employees, at retirement, a tax-favored vehicle that can be funded with unused sick leave and later used to reimburse medical expenses. The Health Care Authority manages and implements the HRA VEBA Trust.

Summary of Bill:

The Human Resources Director position in the OFM is eliminated, and its authority and functions are primarily transferred to the Director of the OFM or the OFM Director's designee. The authority to adopt procedures for implementation of medical expense reimbursement benefit plans for state civil service employees is transferred to the Director of the Washington State Health Care Authority.

Several obsolete references to the Director of Personnel are eliminated, with functions transferred to the OFM. One reference to the Director of Personnel instead is replaced by a reference to the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC): certain medical expense reimbursement benefit plan procedures will apply to employees in a bargaining unit established by the PERC, instead of applying to a bargaining unit established by the Director of Personnel.

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) This is a good bill. The committee unanimously recommended the companion bill, which was identical except for a change in the title.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: John Lane, Office of Financial Management.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.