

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5854

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Labor, February 18, 2015

Title: An act relating to employee organizations submitting digital copies of their collective bargaining agreements to the public employment relations commission.

Brief Description: Requiring employee organizations to submit digital copies of their collective bargaining agreements to the public employment relations commission.

Sponsors: Senators Braun, Baumgartner and Dammeier.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Labor: 2/18/15 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Baumgartner, Chair; Braun, Vice Chair; King and Warnick.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Hasegawa, Ranking Minority Member; Conway.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Keiser.

Staff: Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

Background: Public employees have the right to organize and to designate a representative for collective bargaining. The employer and the bargaining representative must meet at reasonable times to bargain in good faith in an effort to reach agreement with respect to wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment.

Summary of Bill: Bargaining representatives representing public employees must submit a digital copy of their collective bargaining agreement to the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) within 30 days of the effective date of the collective bargaining agreement.

PERC must maintain a website that allows the public to view and download collective bargaining agreements submitted to them by the bargaining representatives. The agreements

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must be available in a uniform digital format and must be available on the website for up to ten years following the expiration of the agreement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill is a simple bill that would require the unions to provide copies of the agreements to PERC. Taxpayers should have easy access to these agreements. The bill is simply about transparency in government. It makes sense to have all agreements on one website so individuals don't need to visit hundreds of websites to access the agreements.

CON: This bill is an unnecessary regulation. Collective bargaining agreements are already posted on county and city public websites. The unions don't control the final document, it's the employers who have final control and should be the ones required to submit the agreements to PERC.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Deb Merle, WA State School Directors' Assn.; Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers of WA.

CON: Joe Kendo, WA State Labor Council; J Pat Thompson, County and City Employees.