

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2507

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Local Government

**Title:** An act relating to employee recognition awards.

**Brief Description:** Concerning employee recognition awards.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Appleton and Griffey.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Local Government: 1/17/18, 1/18/18 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Eliminates the county employee safety award program and instead authorizes county boards of commissioners to recognize employees for outstanding achievements, safety performance, longevity, and public service, with rewards up to \$200 in value.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; McBride, Vice Chair; Griffey, Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson and Peterson.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Pike, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Taylor.

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

**Background:**

Boards of county commissioners (board) may establish employee safety award programs to reward and encourage the safe performance of assigned duties of county employees.

Under a program, a board may authorize every department head and officer of county government to make the determination as to who should receive an employee safety award.

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*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.*

Awards are distributed annually from the county general fund according to the following schedule based upon safe and accident-free performance:

- 5 years = \$2.50;
- 10 years = \$5.00;
- 15 years = \$7.50;
- 20 years = \$10.00;
- 25 years = \$12.50; and
- 30 years = \$20.00.

A board may give department heads and county officers the discretion to purchase a noncash award of equal value in lieu of the cash award. If a noncash award is given, the warrants must be made payable to the business where the award is purchased. Safety awards made to persons whose safe and accident-free performance has directly benefited the county road system are paid from the county road fund by warrant.

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### **Summary of Bill:**

The county employee safety award program is eliminated and instead each board may recognize employees individually or as a class for outstanding achievements, safety performance, longevity, public service, or service. Rewards may not exceed \$200 in value and may be given in cash or noncash items that includes but is not limited to pins, certificates, clocks, and calculators.

A board must establish award criteria and the methods for funding any awards program. Funding for the awards may be as a direct cost within a board's own budget or as an internal service provided to its office and department, with the costs allocated to them through an appropriate internal service fund.

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**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) The current statute only addresses safety awards. This bill expands the award program to all types of recognition and it follows the statutory model that governs rewards for state employees. This bill is a way to modernize the award system for county employees. A \$2.50 reward is not a big award but a \$200 reward is an incentive. It is important to fix this statute. This is a way to recognize the great work that employees do for the citizens they serve.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Appleton, prime sponsor; and Katie Gerard, Thurston County.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.