

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1056

As Passed House:
March 6, 2019

Title: An act relating to creating a task force to identify the role of the workplace in helping curb domestic violence.

Brief Description: Creating a task force to identify the role of the workplace in helping curb domestic violence.

Sponsors: Representatives Mosbrucker, Orwall, Sells, Appleton, Jenkins, Macri, Wylie, Bergquist, Doglio, Stanford and Reeves.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workplace Standards: 1/15/19, 1/24/19 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/6/19, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Creates a Task Force on domestic violence and workplace resources to identify the role of the workplace in helping to curb domestic violence.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKPLACE STANDARDS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Chapman, Vice Chair; Mosbrucker, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Hoff and Ormsby.

Staff: Joan Elgee (786-7106).

Background:

In the criminal context, a domestic violence offense is a crime committed by one family or household member against another. In the absence of a criminal case, a person experiencing domestic violence may seek a civil protection order that restrains the respondent from contacting the protected person or visiting certain locations.

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.

The state has several programs related to domestic violence assistance. For example, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) contracts with local agencies for services to victims, and contact information for domestic violence organizations is on the DSHS's website. The Administrative Office of the Courts prepares and makes available an informational brochure regarding civil protection orders and related matters.

Domestic violence victims may take job-protected leave to seek legal or law enforcement help, seek treatment from a health care provider, or participate in actions to increase the victim's safety. Family members may also take job-protected leave to help a victim.

Summary of Engrossed Bill:

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) must convene a task force (Task Force) on domestic violence and workplace resources to identify the role of the workplace in helping to curb domestic violence.

Commerce must appoint the following members of the Task Force:

- one member representing each of the following:
 - Association of Washington Business;
 - National Federation of Independent Business;
 - Washington Hospitality Association;
 - Washington Retail Association;
 - Washington State Labor Council;
 - Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs;
 - Washington Coalition Against Domestic Violence; and
 - a federally recognized tribe;
- a business owner;
- a survivor of domestic violence; and
- up to two additional members.

The Task Force must review the role of the workplace in the lives of individuals experiencing domestic violence, the appropriate role of employers and employees in helping reduce the incidence of domestic violence, and whether legislation is needed to address these issues.

A preliminary report is due to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2019, and a final report is due December 1, 2020.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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) One in three people are affected by domestic violence. Under this bill, businesses will look at the role they could play regarding domestic violence and help those who do not have a voice. Suggestions heard on last year's bill were considered to make a better bill. This is a common sense way to collaborate to help enforce existing laws and discuss policies. Work may be a refuge for victims, away from the perpetrator. The bill recognizes that workers do not give up their identity when they come to work. The Task Force can come up with ideas, such as resources for employers, that will provide greater access to services and protection to victims.

Labor representation on the Task Force should be increased to add more female voices.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The deadline does not give the Task Force sufficient time given the work it is directed to do.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Mosbrucker, prime sponsor; Lindsey Grad, Service Employees International Union Healthcare; Carey Morris, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Luke Esser, City of Yakima; and Tammie Hetrick, Washington Retail Association.

(Other) Patrick Connor, National Federation of Independent Business.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.