

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2264

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Relations
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to increasing the cap on accrued vacation leave.

Brief Description: Increasing the cap on accrued vacation leave.

Sponsors: Representatives Doglio, Dolan, Thai, Appleton, Wylie, Volz and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Relations: 1/14/20, 1/17/20 [DP];

Appropriations: 1/29/20, 2/8/20 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the cap on accrued vacation leave for state employees from 240 hours to 280 hours.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Gregerson, Chair; Pellicciotti, Vice Chair; Appleton, Dolan and Hudgins.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Goehner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Mosbrucker and Smith.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Walsh, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Carrington Skinner (786-7192).

Background:

State employees are entitled to at least eight hours of vacation leave with full pay for each month of employment. State employees may accrue 240 hours of total unused vacation

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leave, which is the equivalent of 30 eight-hour days. State Ferry employees who are covered by the applicable collective bargaining agreement are entitled to accrue 320 hours of unused vacation leave.

There are a few circumstances under which the 240-hour cap for vacation leave may be exceeded. State employees may accrue leave between the time 240 hours is accrued and the anniversary date of employment without a statement of necessity. If an employee does not use the excess leave by the anniversary date, then the leave is extinguished and considered to have never existed. Excess leave acquired in this manner does not increase any retirement allowance. Additionally, if a leave request is deferred by reason of the employing office, department, or institution's convenience and a statement of necessity is retained by the agency, the accrued leave cap will be extended for each month that the leave is deferred.

When an employee has been terminated by a reduction in force, resignation, dismissal, or retirement, so long as the employee has been employed for at least six months, the employee is entitled to be paid for the amount of vacation leave accrued. If the employee dies, their estate is entitled to be paid the amount of vacation leave accrued.

Summary of Bill:

State employees are permitted to accrue up to 280 hours (or the equivalent of 35 eight-hour days) of unused vacation leave. Internal references in statutory provisions relating to Teachers' Retirement Plan 1 and Public Employees Retirement System Plan 1 have been changed to clarify that pensions under those plans remain unaffected by the increase in the cap.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary 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) In order to make the State of Washington a favorable place to work and attract the best workers possible, it is important to take care of and provide benefits for state employees. The idea for allowing people to accrue more vacation time originated during contract negotiations with the Washington Federation of State Employees, when it was discovered they could not negotiate beyond the current 240-hour cap. Being able to refresh is important, especially in 24/7 institutional settings, where employees are not able to use all their vacation time due to understaffing. This solution would not cost as much as other options because not everyone would take advantage of the cap increase. Bringing the cap to 280 hours provides flexibility by extending the time period during which leave can be taken.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Doglio, prime sponsor; Matt Zuvich, Washington Federation of State Employees; and Seamus Petrie, Washington Public Employees Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 21 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Robinson, 1st Vice Chair; Bergquist, 2nd Vice Chair; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Rude, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Hudgins, Kilduff, Macri, Pettigrew, Pollet, Ryu, Senn, Sullivan, Tarleton, Tharinger and Ybarra.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Chandler, Dye, Hoff, Kraft, Mosbrucker, Schmick, Steele and Sutherland.

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On State Government & Tribal Relations:

No new changes were recommended.

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 Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) approached the state with a proposal to increase the cap in bargaining, but because of the statutory cap, the law needs to be changed. The universities reported widely varying costs, but the WFSE would love to see the bill move forward.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Matt Zuvich, Washington Federation of State Employees.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.