

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6000

As of January 14, 2024

Title: An act relating to interruptive military service credit for members of the state retirement systems.

Brief Description: Concerning interruptive military service credit for members of the state retirement systems.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt, Holy, Lovick, Nobles and Valdez.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 1/15/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands no-cost interruptive military service credit eligibility in the state's pension systems to members who were awarded a service medal.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7460)

Background: The federal Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) requires employers to determine a reemployed service member's eligibility for participation in a pension plan and the vesting and accrual of the service member's pension benefits as if the service member had not left for military service. Consistent with USERRA, members of the state's retirement systems who leave employment to enter the armed forces of the United States may be eligible for interruptive military service credit. Interruptive military service credit applies to all Washington State retirement systems. A member qualifies for this benefit when a leave of absence is taken from a Department of Retirement System covered position to serve in the United States military.

There are two types of benefits for interruptive military service—fully subsidized or no-cost

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interruptive military service credit, and partially subsidized where the member pays the employee portion of contributions for that period and in some cases interest. A member can qualify for up to five years of no-cost interruptive military service credit if they were awarded a campaign or expeditionary medal. In this case, the employer pays the members contributions for that period of time plus interest and the system subsidizes the member contributions and interest. A member awarded a service medal is eligible for up to five years of partially subsidized service credit where the member pays both the employer and employee portion of the contributions.

Summary of Bill: No-cost interruptive military service credit is expanded to include military service where a service medal was awarded. Members that retired prior to the effective date of this act will have their retirement benefits adjusted retroactively.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 9, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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