
Commerce & Labor Committee

HB 2626

Brief Description: Authorizing the governor to suspend the waiting week for individuals who are unemployed because of an emergency or disaster.

Sponsors: Representatives VanDeWege, Kessler, Blake, Takko, DeBolt, Ormsby, Roberts, Kenney, Morrell, Simpson and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Governor to suspend the one-week waiting period requirement for individuals who are unemployed because of an emergency or disaster.

Hearing Date: 2/1/08

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

Background:

An individual is eligible to receive regular unemployment benefits if he or she: (1) worked at least 680 hours in his or her base year; (2) was separated from employment through no fault of his or her own or quit work for good cause; and (3) is able to work and is actively seeking employment. The individual also must have been unemployed for a waiting period of one week.

The one-week waiting period is required to receive federal reimbursement of one-half of benefits paid in the first week of extended unemployment benefits. The state "triggers on" to the extended benefits program during periods of high unemployment. The program begins the third week after a week for which there is an "on" indicator.

Summary of Bill:

The Governor is authorized to suspend the one-week waiting period requirement for individuals who are unemployed because of an emergency or disaster. An "emergency or disaster" is an event that demands immediate action to preserve public health, protect life, protect public property, or to provide relief to any stricken community, or an event that warrants the Governor declaring a state of emergency.

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 Governor's authority to suspend the waiting period expires the first week after a week for which there is an "on" indicator.

Rules Authority: The bill does not address the rule-making powers of an agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 2008.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.