

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2248

As Reported by House Committee On: Government Operations & Elections

Title: An act relating to increasing the number of days allowed to accrue as unused annual leave.

Brief Description: Increasing the number of days allowed to accrue as unused annual leave.

Sponsors: Representatives Reykdal, S. Hunt, Ryu and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations & Elections: 1/24/14, 1/29/14 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows state employees to accrue up to 45 days of annual leave.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives S. Hunt, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Manweller, Orwall, Robinson and Van De Wege.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Christian and Kretz.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

State officers and employees are entitled to one day of paid vacation leave for each month of employment. In addition, an employee shall receive an additional day of paid annual leave for the first two, three, and five continuous years of employment respectively. Continuous part-time employees also are entitled to receive vacation leave on a fractional basis of hours worked.

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.

Employees may accrue 30 days of unused vacation leave. Vacation leave must be taken at a time that is convenient to the employer. An employee's request for annual leave that is deferred for convenience of the employer must be extended for each month the leave is deferred. Employees transferring within state government are entitled to transfer accrued unused annual leave.

Under some state retirement systems, the calculation of the member's average earnable compensation must include eligible cash outs of annual leave of not more than 240 hours based on the member's salary and leave accumulations at the time of retirement.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The number of hours of annual leave an employee may accrue is increased from 240 hours to 360 hours. The number of hours of annual leave allowed for purposes of cash outs and retirement calculations is not changed.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill makes clear that the increased hours of annual leave accrual does not pertain to the calculation for retirement benefits.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Employees would be able to accrue more than 240 hours of annual leave, but you cannot cash out more than that for purposes of retirement benefits, so there should be no fiscal impact. Employees who accrue annual leave are able to donate to the shared leave program, and with more hours that can be accrued, the more people are able to help out other people who need shared leave.

This is intended to fix an unintended impact on state employees caused by the recession. Unyielding workloads and fewer employees have resulted in employees losing leave because they do not have the time to use it. Senior employees earn leave at a high enough rate that it is difficult to use within a year, and because of the legitimate needs of the state, they do not have the time to take it. Employees are hitting the annual leave cap and are losing the leave. By raising the cap, it reduces the need to continuously extend the deferral of the cap.

(Opposed) None.

(Information only) The intent is to not impact the retirement benefits calculation, but the language of the bill needs to be explicit.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Reykdal, prime sponsor; and Michael Weisman, Washington Federation of State Employees.

(Information only) Matt Zuvich, Washington Federation of State Employees; and Dave Nelson, Department of Retirement Systems.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.