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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2730**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** House Civil Rights & Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives Kilduff, Ryu, Klippert, Appleton, Caldier, Davis, Leavitt, and Ormsby)

AN ACT Relating to military spouse employment; adding a new section to chapter 73.16 RCW; and adding a new section to chapter 38.42 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 73.16 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department of veterans affairs, employment security department, and department of commerce shall consult local chambers of commerce, associate development organizations, and businesses to develop a statewide plan for increasing military spouse employment. This statewide plan may include partnerships with chambers of commerce that result in business owners sharing, with the local chambers of commerce, information on the number of military spouses employed and the local chambers of commerce providing this information to the department of veterans affairs.

(2) Participants in the plan development are encouraged to work with the Washington state military transition council and county veterans' advisory boards as defined in RCW 73.08.035.

(3) Funding for the military spouse employment plan shall be established from existing resources.

(4) The department of veterans affairs, employment security department, and department of commerce shall jointly submit a report to the legislature and the joint committee on veterans' and military affairs by December 1, 2020, on the progress of efforts to implement the statewide plan for increasing military spouse employment. The report must include documentation of any findings, next steps, and any policy recommendations.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "military spouse" means any person married or previously married to a military service member, irrespective of the length of the marriage, during the military service member's service in any branch of the United States armed forces as an active duty service member, reservist, or national guard member.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 38.42 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The spouse of a service member may terminate an employment contract without penalty at any time after the service member receives military service orders for a permanent change of station if:

(a) The spouse provides written notice, including email, to the employer of the termination under this section; and

(b) The spouse provides written proof to the employer of the official orders showing that the service member has received military orders for a permanent change of station.

(2) Termination of an employment contract under this section is effective on the day notice is given under subsection (1) of this section or on a date mutually agreed to by the parties to the employment contract.

(3) An employer may not impose any penalty for termination of an employment contract under this section.

(4) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Employment contract" means a contract that establishes the terms of employment or other professional relationship with the spouse of a service member. "Employment contract" does not include an independent contractor agreement.

(b) "Penalty" means any fee or cost or liability for breach of contract or any other adverse consequence imposed by the employer.

(5) This section applies prospectively only and not retroactively. It applies only to employment contracts entered into on or after the effective date of this section.

(6) Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the terms, conditions, or practices contained in any collective bargaining agreement in effect on the effective date of this section until the expiration date of such agreement.

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