

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2346

Brief Description: Evaluating drug-free workplace programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Clements and Conway

Hearing: January 19, 2000

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the expiration date of the drug-free workplace program an additional three years.

BACKGROUND:

In 1996, the drug-free workplace demonstration program was enacted by unanimous votes of the house and senate. The program allows private employers who adopt a drug-free workplace program to receive a 5 percent premium discount on their workers' compensation payments. The discount may last for three years.

Programs must require that new employees and employees involved in work-related injuries submit to a substance abuse test, as long as, the injury was due to circumstance within their control. Employees cannot be terminated based on a first-time positive abuse test. They must submit to a monitored program, however. Information obtained through the substance abuse program is confidential.

Other requirements of the program include the provision of an employee assistance program, employee referral, employee education, and supervisor training. The department was to evaluate the costs and benefits of the program and report to the legislature by December 1999.

About 585 employers have had a program, and 318 currently have certified programs. 190 of these employers have had programs for at least three years, while 77 joined but later withdrew. Workers' compensation discounts have totaled 2.8 million dollars.

The program expires January 1, 2001.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

The drug-free workplace program's expiration date is extended from January 2001 to January 2004.

The department of labor and industries will evaluate the costs and benefits of the program. The department will report on the findings of the evaluation on September 2001 and December 2000.

RULES AUTHORITY: The bill does not contain provisions addressing the rule making powers of an agency.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of a session in which bill is passed.