

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

2SSB 5171

Brief Description: Regulating Washington State Patrol employment agreements.

Sponsors: Senators Goings and Prentice

Hearing: April 1, 1999

Brief Summary of Bill

- Includes wage-related matters as mandatory subjects of bargaining for negotiations between the Washington State Patrol and its appointed officers, but prohibits negotiations over rates of pay, wage levels, or matters relating to retirement benefits or health care and other employee insurance benefits.
- Requires conditioning wage-related provisions, if entered into before the Legislature approves the necessary funding, on subsequent approval of the funds.

BACKGROUND:

Employees of cities, counties, and other political subdivisions of the state bargain their wages and working conditions under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). The Washington State Patrol is also subject to the act with respect to its appointed officers.

Under the PECBA, collective bargaining is defined as the mutual obligation of the employer and exclusive bargaining representative to negotiate in good faith over specified mandatory subjects of bargaining: grievance procedures and personnel matters, including wages, hours, and working conditions. With respect to negotiations between the Washington State Patrol and its officers, the collective bargaining definition excludes wages and wage-related matters. This exclusion has been interpreted by the Washington Court of Appeals as allowing the parties to bargain these matters as permissive subjects of

bargaining.

State patrol officers and certain other law enforcement officers and fire fighters are considered "uniformed personnel." To resolve bargaining disputes involving these uniformed personnel, the PECBA requires binding interest arbitration if negotiations for a contract reach impasse and cannot be resolved through mediation.

SUMMARY OF BILL:

For collective negotiations between the Washington State Patrol and its appointed officers, the mandatory subjects of bargaining include wage-related matters, but negotiations are prohibited over rates of pay, wage levels, or matters relating to retirement benefits or health care and other employee insurance benefits.

If wage-related provisions are entered into before the Legislature approves the necessary funding, then these provisions must be conditioned on subsequent approval of the funds.

Technical changes are made to conform the scope of interest arbitration between the Washington State Patrol and its officers to the matters that are subject to bargaining, and to delete conflicting or obsolete provisions from the statute.

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 session in which bill is passed.