

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5366

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, February 4, 1999

Title: An act relating to veterans' scoring criteria in employment examinations.

Brief Description: Changing scoring criteria for veterans' employment examinations.

Sponsors: Senators Patterson, McCaslin, Oke, Horn, Goings and Bauer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/1/99, 2/4/99 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5366 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Horn, Kline and McCaslin.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7445)

Background: In all competitive examinations for state and local public employment, veterans are given a preference status by adding to the passing grade, based upon a rating of 100 points, the following: (1) 10 percent to a veteran who is not receiving any retirement payments; (2) 5 percent to a veteran who is receiving veterans retirement payments; and (3) 5 percent to a veteran who, after previous state or local public employment, is called or recalled to active military service for a period of at least one year during any period of war, for a first promotional examination only.

These examination preferences must be claimed by a veteran within eight years of the date of his or her release from active service.

Summary of Substitute Bill: In all competitive examinations for state and local public employment veterans are given a scoring criteria to be added to a passing score, based on a rating of 100 points: (1) 10 percent to a veteran who served during a period of war or in a hostile environment and who does not receive military retirement pay; (2) 5 percent to a veteran who did not serve during a war or in a hostile environment or is receiving military retirement pay; (3) 5 percent to a veteran who was called to active duty for one year or more from state or local public employment. This percentage is added to the first promotional exam only.

Veterans' scoring criteria must be claimed within 15 years of release from active service, unless a valid and extenuating reason arises including, but not limited to: (a) documented medical reasons beyond the control of the veteran; (b) any Veterans' Administration documented disabled veteran; or (c) any veteran who loses his job, without fault, and whose livelihood is adversely affected may seek preference employment consideration.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Any veteran who has his or her employment terminated through no fault or action of his or her own and whose livelihood is adversely affected may seek scoring criteria employment consideration under this section.

The section formerly used the term preference.–

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This legislation will help all veterans. The time extension will help homeless veterans who are now able to work and care for themselves as well as veterans who lose their job long after they leave the service.

Testimony Against: It affects three groups: (1) police officers; (2) firefighters; and (3) medics. The absolute best people should be hired for these positions because their work directly affects people's lives. Preferences that may bump a mediocre candidate into top position is too big a risk.

Preferences came about as a result of the draft. In today's world, people make a conscious decision to join the military. They receive training and money for education. We do not need a preference anymore.

Testified: Dennis Primoli, VLC (pro); Bob Jacobs, Mayor, Olympia (con).