
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2275

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2014 Regular Session

By House Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government & Information Technology (originally sponsored by Representatives Van De Wege, Sells, Fitzgibbon, Dunshee, Farrell, Pollet, Reykdal, Ryu, Morrell, Habib, Bergquist, and Ormsby)

READ FIRST TIME 02/11/14.

1 AN ACT Relating to whistleblowers in the electrical industry; and
2 adding new sections to chapter 19.28 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 19.28 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 The use of unsafe practices and work in violation of this chapter
7 can cause serious and preventable injury to employees and the public in
8 addition to property damage. It is the policy of the legislature that
9 employees should be protected from adverse workplace actions for being
10 a whistleblower. The legislature intends to protect employees by
11 creating a remedy for whistleblowers who experience adverse action.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 19.28 RCW
13 to read as follows:

14 (1) An employer may not take adverse action against an employee who
15 is a whistleblower. An employee aggrieved by a violation of this
16 section may file an action in a court of competent jurisdiction in the
17 county where the violation is alleged to have occurred. The court may

1 award compensatory damages, injunctive relief, attorneys' fees, and
2 costs to an employee who prevails in the action.

3 (2) The identity of a whistleblower who reports, in good faith, to
4 the department or a political subdivision that regulates electrical
5 installations, practices that may violate this chapter or rules adopted
6 under this chapter is confidential. The provisions of RCW 4.24.500
7 through 4.24.520, providing certain protections to persons who
8 communicate to government agencies, apply to such reports.

9 (3) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
10 apply unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

11 (a) "Adverse action" means discharging or in any manner
12 discriminating against an employee because the employee:

13 (i) Reported a violation of this chapter;

14 (ii) Filed a complaint, instituted a proceeding, or caused to be
15 instituted a proceeding under or related to this chapter;

16 (iii) Testified or is planning to testify in a proceeding under or
17 related to this chapter; or

18 (iv) Exercised, on his or her own behalf or on the behalf of
19 others, any right or responsibility afforded by this chapter.

20 (b) "Whistleblower" means an employee who:

21 (i) In good faith, reports or opposes a practice that may violate
22 this chapter or rules adopted under this chapter or the safety,
23 installation, repair, or maintenance policies of his or her employer;

24 (ii) Is believed to have reported the practices described in (b)(i)
25 of this subsection; or

26 (iii) Assisted in reporting, provided information in connection
27 with reporting, or testified regarding the practices described in
28 (b)(i) of this subsection.

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