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SENATE BILL 6478

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Ranker and Parlette

Read first time 01/21/16. Referred to Committee on Trade & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing assistance to communities impacted  
2 by large employment losses; adding new sections to chapter 43.88 RCW;  
3 adding a new section to chapter 41.04 RCW; adding a new section to  
4 chapter 39.26 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.88  
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) "Eligible area" means a rural county that has experienced  
9 employment growth of two and one-half percent or less in the prior  
10 calendar year that experiences a permanent plant closing or permanent  
11 mass layoff by an employer subject to the federal worker adjustment  
12 and retraining notification act resulting in an employment loss for  
13 twenty or more workers.

14 (2) "Impacted worker" means any individual:

15 (a) Who has been terminated or received a notice of termination  
16 of employment as a result of a plant closure or permanent reduction  
17 of operations at the individual's place of employment;

18 (b) Who is eligible for unemployment compensation benefits; and

19 (c) Whose place of employment was with an employer subject to the  
20 federal worker adjustment and retraining notification act and located  
21 in an eligible area.

1 (3) "Rural county" has the same meaning as in RCW 82.14.370.

2 (4) The employment security department shall designate which  
3 counties and individuals are eligible areas and impacted workers for  
4 purposes of sections 2, 3, and 4 of this act. Designation as an  
5 eligible area and impacted worker expires one year from the date of  
6 designation.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.88  
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 Beginning with the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium, when distributing  
10 capital funds through competitive programs for environmental,  
11 community, cultural, infrastructure, and economic development  
12 projects, all state agencies must consider whether the entity or  
13 project receiving the funds is located in an impacted area as defined  
14 in section 1 of this act. A preference or factor should be provided  
15 to influence selection of projects for funding in impact areas. For  
16 purposes of this section, capital funds does not include funding  
17 through the omnibus transportation appropriations act.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 41.04  
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 (1) In all competitive examinations to determine the  
21 qualifications of applicants for public offices, positions, or  
22 employment with the state, the state employer shall give a scoring  
23 criteria status to all impacted workers as defined in section 1 of  
24 this act, by adding to the passing mark, grade, or rating only, based  
25 upon a possible rating of one hundred points as perfect a percentage,  
26 five percent. The percentage shall be added to the passing mark,  
27 grade, or rating of competitive examinations for the period in which  
28 the individual meets the definition of an impacted worker under  
29 section 1 of this act.

30 (2) The intent of this section is to provide a comparable  
31 preference to impacted workers as provided to veterans of the armed  
32 forces as defined in RCW 41.04.005. The office of financial  
33 management may adopt rules to implement this section.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 39.26  
35 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) State agencies are encouraged to award procurement contracts  
2 under this chapter to businesses who hire impacted workers as defined  
3 by section 1 of this act.

4 (2) The director must adopt rules to provide a preference for the  
5 award of state agency procurements to businesses that hire impacted  
6 workers as defined by section 1 of this act. The preference must  
7 apply to procurements contracts that are exempt from competitive  
8 bidding requirements. The director may adopt rules to provide a  
9 preference in competitive procurements only to the extent that such  
10 an in-state preference does not cause a discriminatory effect against  
11 Washington vendors that do business outside the state.

12 (3) The director, in consultation with the employment security  
13 department, shall develop a database of impacted workers that  
14 potential bidders may access to meet the criteria developed for the  
15 preferences created in this section.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act shall be known as the community  
17 opportunity program for employment act.

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