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**SENATE BILL 5261**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Zeiger, Kuderer, Das, Warnick, Nguyen, and Palumbo

AN ACT Relating to creating a pilot program for certain cities to hire homeless persons for local beautification projects; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department of commerce must establish a pilot program for cities to provide job opportunities to and hire persons experiencing homelessness for the purposes of local beautification projects. The pilot program must include three cities, two on the west side and one on the east side of the Cascade mountain range. The cities selected are strongly encouraged to administer their programs during the summer months.

(2) Persons experiencing homelessness who are hired under this pilot program must be paid at least the local minimum wage and be connected with organizations that provide wraparound housing services.

(3) The pilot program expires July 1, 2022. The cities selected to participate in the pilot program must provide a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2022, that includes at least the following information: The number of persons experiencing homelessness hired during the pilot program, the number of such persons connected with wraparound housing services, strategies for hiring persons experiencing homelessness for other local projects, and any legislative recommendations.

(4) Persons experiencing homelessness who are hired under this pilot program are not considered state employees. Other provisions of law relating to civil service, hours of work, rate of compensation, sick leave, unemployment compensation, state retirement plans, and vacation leave do not apply to this pilot program, except for project supervisors, who must be city employees, and other administrative and supervisory personnel.

(5) The pilot program is considered an unemployment work-relief or work-training program as provided in RCW 50.44.040(4) and, as such, the services of persons experiencing homelessness under this pilot program are excluded from the term "unemployment" and unemployment compensation coverage. The department of commerce must advise the cities selected under the pilot program to notify such persons hired under the pilot program of this exclusion.

(6) For purposes of this section, "persons experiencing homelessness" means individuals living outside or in a building not meant for human habitation or which they have no legal right to occupy, in an emergency shelter, or in a temporary housing program that may include a transitional and supportive housing program if habitation time limits exist.

(7) This section expires January 1, 2023.

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