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**SENATE BILL 5112**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Brown, Parlette, and Benton

AN ACT Relating to a pilot program that provides incentives for investments in Washington state job creation and economic development; and adding a new chapter to Title 82 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Businesses that invest capital create jobs and generate economic activity that supports a healthy Washington economy. The legislature finds that these investments result in future revenues that support schools and our communities. Therefore, the legislature finds that a pilot program must be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of a program that invests business taxes from new investments into workforce training programs that support manufacturing businesses in the state of Washington thereby creating jobs and capital investments in the state for the benefit of its citizens.

(2)(a) This subsection is the tax preference performance statement for the sales tax deferral provided in section 4 of this act on the costs of qualified industrial facilities and equipment. This performance statement is only intended to be used for subsequent evaluation of the tax preference. It is not intended to create a private right of action by any party or be used to determine eligibility for preferential tax treatment.

(b) The legislature categorizes the tax preference as one intended to create or retain jobs and to provide funding to support job readiness training, professional development, or apprenticeship programs in manufacturing or production occupations, as indicated in RCW 82.32.808(2) (c) and (f).

(c) It is the legislature's specific public policy objective to provide a pilot program that would provide a sales tax deferral on the construction and equipment costs of up to five new manufacturing facilities, two of which must be located in eastern Washington. When deferred taxes are repaid, the deferred taxes are reinvested to support job readiness training, professional development, or apprenticeship programs in manufacturing or production occupations.

(d) To measure the effectiveness of the deferral provided in this act in achieving the specific public policy objective described in (c) of this subsection, the joint legislative audit and review committee should refer to information available from the employment security department and department of revenue. If a review finds that each eligible investment project generated at least twenty full-time jobs and increased training opportunities for manufacturing and production jobs, then the legislature intends for the legislative auditor to recommend extending the expiration date of the tax preference. For purposes of this subsection (2)(d), full-time jobs includes both temporary construction jobs and permanent full-time employment positions at the eligible investment project within one year of the date that the facility became operationally complete as determined by the department of revenue.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Applicant" means a person applying for a tax deferral under this chapter.

(2) "Eligible investment project" means up to ten million dollars in construction costs on five manufacturing investment projects, at least two of which must be located east of the crest of the Cascade mountains.

(3) "Initiation of construction" has the same meaning as in RCW 82.63.010.

(4) "Investment project" means an investment in qualified buildings or qualified machinery and equipment, including labor and services rendered in the planning, installation, and construction of the project.

(5) "Manufacturing" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 82.04.120.

(6) "Person" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 82.04.030.

(7) "Qualified buildings" means construction of new structures, and expansion or renovation of existing structures for the purpose of increasing floor space or production capacity used for manufacturing, including plant offices and warehouses or other facilities for the storage of raw material or finished goods if such facilities are an essential or an integral part of a factory, mill, plant, or laboratory used for manufacturing. If a building is used partly for manufacturing and partly for other purposes, the applicable tax deferral must be determined by apportionment of the costs of construction under rules adopted by the department.

(8) "Qualified employment position" means a permanent full-time employee employed in the eligible investment project during the entire tax year. The term "entire tax year" means a full-time position that is filled for a period of twelve consecutive months. The term "full-time" means at least thirty-five hours a week, four hundred fifty-five hours a quarter, or one thousand eight hundred twenty hours a year.

(9) "Qualified machinery and equipment" means all new industrial fixtures, equipment, and support facilities that are an integral and necessary part of a manufacturing operation. "Qualified machinery and equipment" includes: Computers; software; data processing equipment; laboratory equipment; manufacturing components such as belts, pulleys, shafts, and moving parts; molds, tools, and dies; operating structures; and all equipment used to control or operate the machinery.

(10) "Recipient" means a person receiving a tax deferral under this chapter.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The lessor or owner of a qualified building is not eligible for a deferral unless:

(1) The underlying ownership of the building, machinery, and equipment vests exclusively in the same person; or

(2)(a) The lessor by written contract agrees to pass the economic benefit of the deferral to the lessee;

(b) The lessee that receives the economic benefit of the deferral agrees in writing with the department to complete the annual survey required under RCW 82.60.070; and

(c) The economic benefit of the deferral passed to the lessee is no less than the amount of tax deferred by the lessor and is evidenced by written documentation of any type of payment, credit, or other financial arrangement between the lessor or owner of the qualified building and the lessee.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Application for deferral of taxes under this chapter must be made before initiation of the construction of the investment project or acquisition of equipment or machinery. The application must be made to the department in a form and manner prescribed by the department. The application must contain information regarding the location of the investment project, the applicant's average employment in the state for the prior year, estimated or actual new employment related to the project, estimated or actual wages of employees related to the project, estimated or actual costs, time schedules for completion and operation, and other information required by the department. The department must rule on the application within sixty days.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department must issue a sales and use tax deferral certificate for state and local sales and use taxes due under chapters 82.08, 82.12, and 82.14 RCW on each eligible investment project.

(2) The department must keep a running total of all deferrals granted under this chapter during each fiscal biennium.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The recipient must begin paying the deferred taxes in the fifth year after the date certified by the department as the date on which the investment project has been operationally completed. The first payment of ten percent of the deferred taxes will be due on December 31st of the fifth calendar year after such certified date, with subsequent payments of ten percent of the deferred taxes due on December 31st each of the following nine years.

(2) The department may authorize an accelerated repayment schedule upon request of the recipient.

(3) Interest may not be charged on any taxes deferred under this chapter for the period of deferral, although all other penalties and interest applicable to delinquent excise taxes may be assessed and imposed for delinquent payments under this chapter. The debt for deferred taxes will not be extinguished by insolvency or other failure of the recipient. Transfer of ownership does not terminate the deferral. The deferral is transferred, subject to the successor meeting the eligibility requirements of this chapter, for the remaining periods of the deferral.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Taxes deferred and repaid under this chapter on an investment project must be deposited in the invest in Washington account created in this section. The invest in Washington account hereby created in the state treasury must be used exclusively by the state board for community and technical colleges for supporting customized training programs, job skills programs, job readiness training, workforce professional development, and to assist employers with state-approved apprenticeship programs for manufacturing and production occupations.

(2) Revenues to the invest in Washington account consist of amounts transferred by the state treasurer as provided in subsection (3) of this section.

(3) By June 1, 2016, and by June 1st of every subsequent year, the department must notify the state treasurer of the amount of revenue under this section contributed to the invest in Washington account since the effective date of this section through May 15, 2016, in the case of the first notification under this subsection (3), and since the previous May 15th for subsequent notifications under this subsection (3). The department may make adjustments to the annual notification under this subsection (3) as may be necessary to correct errors in the previous notification or offset previous contributions of amounts that did not qualify for credit under this section.

 (4) By July 1, 2016, and by July 1st of every subsequent year, the state treasurer must transfer the amount included in the department's most recent notification under subsection (3) of this section from the general fund to the invest in Washington account. Money in the account may only be appropriated for the purposes specified in subsection (1) of this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act may be known and cited as the invest in Washington act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 8 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 82 RCW.

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