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**SENATE BILL 5783**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Conway, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Kuderer, Mullet, Stanford, and Van De Wege

AN ACT Relating to reestablishing the underground economy task force; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The joint legislative task force on the underground economy in the Washington state construction industry is reestablished. For purposes of this section, "underground economy" means contracting and construction activities in which payroll is unreported or underreported with consequent nonpayment of payroll taxes to federal and state agencies including nonpayment of workers' compensation and unemployment compensation taxes.

(2) The purpose of the task force is to formulate a state policy to establish cohesion and transparency between state agencies so as to increase the oversight and regulation of the underground economy practices in the construction industry in this state. To assist the task force in achieving this goal and to determine the extent of and projected costs to the state and workers of the underground economy in the construction industry, the task force shall contract with the institute for public policy, or, if the institute is unavailable, another entity with expertise capable of providing such assistance.

(3)(a) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(i) The chair and ranking minority member of the senate labor, commerce, research and development committee;

(ii) The chair and ranking minority member of the house of representatives commerce and labor committee;

(iii) Four members representing the construction business, selected from nominations submitted by statewide construction business organizations and appointed jointly by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

(iv) Four members representing construction laborers, selected from nominations submitted by statewide labor organizations and appointed jointly by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(v) One representative from the state attorney general's office.

(b) In addition, the employment security department, the department of labor and industries, and the department of revenue shall cooperate with the task force and shall each maintain a liaison representative, who is a nonvoting member of the task force. The departments shall cooperate with the task force and the institute for public policy, or other entity as appropriate, and shall provide information and data as the task force or the institute, or other entity as appropriate, may reasonably request.

(c) The task force shall choose its chair or cochairs from among its legislative membership. The chairs of the senate labor, commerce, and tribal affairs committee and the house of representatives labor and workplace standards committee shall convene the initial meeting of the task force.

(4)(a) The task force shall use legislative facilities and staff support shall be provided by senate committee services and the house of representatives office of program research. Within available funding, the task force may hire additional staff with specific technical expertise if such expertise is necessary to carry out the mandates of this study.

(b) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members, except those representing an employer or organization, are entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(c) The expenses of the task force will be paid jointly by the senate and house of representatives. Task force expenditures are subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or their successor committees.

(5) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to the legislature by December 1, 2022.

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