

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1044

*As Reported By House Committee on:
State Government*

Title: An act relating to shared leave.

Brief Description: Including sick leave benefits in the shared leave program.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Fraser, Anderson, Basich, R. Meyers, Kremen, Pruitt and Winsley.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, February 12, 1991, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1044 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 10 members: Representatives Anderson, Chair; Pruitt, Vice Chair; McLean, Ranking Minority Member; Bowman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler; R. Fisher; Grant; Moyer; O'Brien; and Sheldon.

Staff: Linda May (786-7135).

Background: In 1989, the Legislature created a leave sharing program. Under this program, a state employee may share annual leave with a fellow employee under certain conditions. Recipients of shared leave are state employees who have used or are about to use all of their sick leave and annual leave reserves, who are dealing with an extraordinary illness or injury, and who face job loss or leave without pay status as a result. Employees may donate any amount of annual leave as long as they maintain a balance of 10 days.

In 1990, the Legislature modified the shared leave program to allow the sharing of sick leave for employees of community colleges, school districts, and educational service districts who earn sick leave but not annual leave. Employees in this category may donate a maximum of six days of sick leave per year to the shared leave program. The donor must maintain a minimum sick leave balance of 60 days.

Summary of Substitute Bill: State employees may donate sick leave to the shared leave program. Employees may not donate more than six days of sick leave in a 12 month period and must maintain a minimum sick leave balance of 60 days. The leave sharing program for employees of community colleges, school districts, and educational service districts is expanded to allow all those who earn sick leave to donate sick leave to the shared leave program. These employees must maintain a minimum sick leave balance of 60 days and may not donate more than six days of sick leave in a 12 month period.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill put no limit on the amount of sick leave state employees could donate and required employees to maintain a minimum sick leave balance of 10 days. The substitute bill puts a limit of six days on the amount of sick leave employees may donate and requires an employee to maintain a sick leave balance of 60 days. In the original bill, employees of community colleges, school districts, and educational service districts who earn both sick leave and annual leave were excluded from donating sick leave to the shared leave program. The substitute bill includes this group.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 12, 1991 (on substitute bill).

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (on original bill) Sharing of leave is humanitarian. The shared leave program helps a lot of people. While there are costs associated with including sick leave in the program, there may be fewer sick leave hours to cash out.

Testimony Against: (on original bill) Some employees are excluded from being able to donate sick leave. Ten days is too short of a minimum sick leave balance. Including sick leave in the program is expensive. Sick leave is like an insurance policy and should be considered differently than annual leave.

Witnesses: Representative Karen Fraser (in favor); Mark Brown, Washington Federation of State Employees (in favor); Mike Cheney, Office of Financial Management (fiscal impacts); David Westberg, International Union of Operating Engineers (in favor with amendment); and Larry Lael, State Board for Community College Education.