

**HB 2537-S - DIGEST**

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Provides that by January 1, 2007, the department shall develop and begin a pilot program to allow employers to assist workers in completing an application for benefits . This pilot program does not replace the current method for reporting as provided in RCW 51.28.020.

Directs the department to develop requirements or rules for employers who participate in the pilot program, including provisions to ensure prompt reporting of the claim and communicating a worker's rights and responsibilities under the pilot program. The pilot program shall include the voluntary participation of employers that represent a cross-section of industries, geographic areas, union and nonunion workers, large and small businesses, and other criteria established by the department with input of business and labor leaders.

Provides that, during the pilot period, the department shall consider steps to address the unique needs and issues of small employers.

Declares that the number of participating employers must not be more than five hundred during the first year of the pilot program. This number may be increased to seven hundred fifty during the second year of the pilot program.

Provides that the pilot program expires July 1, 2009.