
Appropriations Committee

HB 1124

Brief Description: Adding the department of natural resources to the definition of "employer" under RCW 41.37.010.

Sponsors: Representatives VanDeWege, B. Sullivan, O'Brien, Eickmeyer, Lovick, McCoy, Lantz, Simpson, Williams and Dickerson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to the definition of employer in the Public Safety Employees' Retirement System.
- Removes "employers employing statewide elective officials" from the definition of employer in the Public Safety Employees' Retirement System.

Hearing Date: 1/22/07

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Background:

The Public Safety Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) was created in 2004 and opened to members on July 1, 2006. The PSERS provides retirement benefits for state and local government employees who work in positions with law enforcement duties but are not eligible for membership in the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System. Members of the PSERS with at least 20 years of service will be eligible for full retirement benefits from age 60, five years earlier than the regular retirement age in PERS Plans 2 and 3. Members of PSERS with 20 years of service may also early retire beginning at age 53 with a 3 percent reduction in benefits per year of early retirement.

Membership in the PSERS is restricted by an individual's employer and by specific job criteria. The PSERS employers are defined as the Department of Corrections, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Gambling Commission, the State Patrol, the Liquor Control Board, county

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corrections departments, and the corrections departments of municipalities not classified as First Class cities, and employers employing statewide elective officials.

To meet the individual job criteria, PSERS employees must work full-time and hold a position: that requires completion of a certified criminal justice training course and which has the authority to arrest, investigate crimes, enforce the law, and carry a firearm; in which the primary duty is to ensure the custody and security of incarcerated individuals as a probation officer, corrections officer or jailer; that is a limited authority Washington Peace Officer; or in which the primary responsibility is to supervise employees who are eligible for membership under one of the previously listed membership criteria.

Summary of Bill:

The list of employers that are PSERS-eligible is amended to remove "other employers employing statewide elective officials," and add the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 2007.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.