

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1417

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 1, 2007

Title: An act relating to Washington state patrol survivor benefits.

Brief Description: Providing reimbursement for certain Washington state patrol survivor benefits.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Lovick, Roach, Simpson, Hurst, O'Brien, Eddy, Ericks, Eickmeyer, Kelley, VanDeWege, Pedersen, Sells, Hankins, B. Sullivan, Dickerson, Rodne, Springer, Appleton, Rolfes, Hudgins, Pettigrew, Williams, Kessler, Green, Ormsby, P. Sullivan and Santos).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/14/07, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/28/07, 3/01/07 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Marr, Vice Chair; Murray, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Berkey, Clements, Delvin, Eide, Holmquist, Jacobsen, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, Sheldon and Spanel.

Staff: Dory Nicpon (786-7321)

Background: Certain retired or disabled public employees may purchase health care benefits from the Public Employees' Benefits Board (PEBB), administered by the Health Care Authority (HCA). The coverage is purchased at full cost based on the risk pool that the participants belong to, and includes administrative costs for each participant.

The 2001 Legislature enacted Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1371 (ESHB 1371), which enabled surviving spouses of certain emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty on or after January 1, 1998, to purchase health care benefits from the PEBB. The emergency service personnel identified under ESHB 1371 did not include Washington State Patrol officers.

The 2006 Legislature enacted Senate Bill 6723, which reimburses survivors of all LEOFF 2 members killed in the course of employment for the cost of participating in a PEBB health insurance plan as a benefit from the LEOFF 2 retirement fund. The LEOFF 2 members are not offered a contractual right to reimbursement for the survivor health care insurance costs,

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and the Legislature reserved the right to amend or repeal the 2006 act for future reimbursements.

Summary of Bill: The definition of emergency service personnel for purposes of eligibility to enroll in PEBB health benefit plans is expanded to include surviving spouses and dependent children of members of the Washington State Patrol Retirement System (WSPRS) killed in the line of duty. Reimbursement for survivor and dependent health benefit premium payments is added to the death benefits provided to survivors of members of the WSPRS killed in the line of duty. Reimbursement of premium payments is not provided to survivors as a contractual right.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Transportation): A short title is added to the act to honor two Washington State Patrol officers killed in the line of duty.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill addresses an issue of fairness. It establishes the same treatment for surviving dependents of Washington State Patrol officers killed in the line of duty as is accorded the surviving dependents of other emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Lovick, prime sponsor; Tommie Pillow, Washington State Patrol Troopers Association; Billie Saunders, Gayle Frink-Schultz, citizen; Captain Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.