

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5804

As Reported by House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to voluntarily leaving part-time work.

Brief Description: Setting forth the circumstances under which a person qualifies for benefits when voluntarily leaving part-time work.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 3/20/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Sets forth the circumstances in which a quit of part-time employment does not disqualify an individual from receiving unemployment benefits for a subsequent loss of full-time employment.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Crouse, Green, Moeller and Williams.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134)

Background:

The unemployment compensation system is designed and intended to provide partial wage replacement for workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. Eligible unemployed workers receive benefits based on their earnings in their base year. Most covered employers pay contributions (payroll taxes) to finance benefits. The Employment Security Department administers the system.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

An individual is eligible to receive regular benefits if he or she: (1) worked at least 680 hours in his or her base year; (2) was separated from employment through no fault of his or her own, or quit work for reasons listed in state law or for good cause; and (3) is able to work and is actively searching for work.

An individual is disqualified from benefits if he or she quit work without good cause. The disqualification is for seven weeks and until the individual earns wages in covered employment equal to seven times his or her weekly benefit amount.

Summary of Bill:

An individual is not disqualified from unemployment benefits if he or she:

- was simultaneously employed in part-time employment and full-time employment;
- voluntarily quit part-time employment before the loss of full-time employment;
- did not have prior knowledge that he or she would be separated from full-time employment; and
- is otherwise eligible for benefits from the loss of full-time employment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) My constituent worked two jobs. After a period of time, she quit her part-time work. Then she was laid off from her full-time work. The penalty box for the quit prevented her from receiving benefits for the layoff. Someone who is working so hard and doing so well should not be punished. The bill is narrowly drawn to address these circumstances.

(Neutral) Funds are available for the costs of training staff and reprogramming computer systems. The agency does not anticipate any problems administering the bill.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Keiser, prime sponsor.

(Neutral) Neil Gorrell, Employment Security Department.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.