
**Labor & Workplace Standards
Committee**

SB 6197

Brief Description: Regarding an employer's payment of indebtedness upon the death of an employee.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Baumgartner, Hasegawa and Conway.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the limit on indebtedness that may be paid to survivors of a deceased employee of the state and municipal corporations.

Hearing Date: 2/20/18

Staff: Joan Elgee (786-7106).

Background:

Following an employee's death, an employer other than the state must pay the decedent's surviving spouse amounts owed to the decedent for the decedent's services up a limit of \$2,500. The surviving spouse must request the payment and an executor or administrator of the decedent's estate must not have been appointed. If there is no surviving spouse, the monies are paid to any child or children, or if none, to the parent.

A special provision applies when the state is the employer. In these cases, the maximum amount that the state may pay the decedent's survivors for the decedent's work is currently \$13,500. This amount is based on the increase in the consumer price index, as authorized in statute, and determined by the Director of the Office of Financial Management.

If the decedent's estate is valued at \$100,000 or less, or the right to the indebtedness is subject to a community property agreement, an employer may distribute the entire indebtedness if certain requirements are met.

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.

In all cases, an employer must require proof of the claimant's relationship to the decedent.

Summary of Bill:

There is no limit on the indebtedness that must be paid by the state or municipal corporations to survivors of a deceased employee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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