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**SENATE BILL 5297**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Hunt, Conway, Keiser, Dhingra, Saldaña, Kuderer, and Pedersen

AN ACT Relating to extending collective bargaining rights to assistant attorneys general; amending RCW 41.80.005, 41.80.010, 43.10.070, and 43.10.060; adding a new section to chapter 41.80 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the legal services provided by assistant attorneys general in the office of the attorney general are crucial to the ability of the state officials, agencies, colleges, boards, and commissions to function and fulfill their obligations to the citizens of the state. Assistant attorneys general are exempt from civil service under RCW 41.06.070. The assistant attorneys general currently have no mechanism through which to collectively bargain for salary increases. The legislature finds the office of the attorney general has experienced increased difficulty recruiting and retaining attorneys due to the disparity in wages paid to assistant attorneys general as compared to attorneys in other public sector positions. This type of turnover is costly to the office of the attorney general, negatively impacts morale, interferes with the ability of the office to succession plan, and ultimately harms the citizens of this state. Therefore, it is the legislature's intent to empower assistant attorneys general to collectively bargain for fair wages that will foster job satisfaction and the highest standards of professional competence among assistant attorneys general.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 41.80 RCW to read as follows:

(1) In addition to the agencies defined in RCW 41.80.005 and subject to the provisions of this section, this chapter applies to assistant attorneys general.

(2)(a) Assistant attorneys general who are not otherwise excluded from bargaining under (b) of this subsection are granted the right to collectively bargain.

(b) Division chiefs, deputy attorneys general, the solicitor general, special assistant attorneys general, confidential employees as defined in RCW 41.80.005, and any assistant or deputy attorney general who reports directly to the attorney general are excluded from this section and do not have the right to collectively bargain.

(3) The only unit appropriate for the purpose of collective bargaining under this chapter is a statewide unit of all assistant attorneys general not otherwise excluded from bargaining.

(4) The governor or the governor's designee and an exclusive bargaining representative shall negotiate one master collective bargaining agreement for assistant attorneys general.

**Sec.**  RCW 41.80.005 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 43 s 444 are each amended to read as follows:

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Agency" means any agency as defined in RCW 41.06.020 and covered by chapter 41.06 RCW. "Agency" also includes the assistant attorneys general of the attorney general's office, regardless of whether those employees are exempt under chapter 41.06 RCW.

(2) "Collective bargaining" means the performance of the mutual obligation of the representatives of the employer and the exclusive bargaining representative to meet at reasonable times and to bargain in good faith in an effort to reach agreement with respect to the subjects of bargaining specified under RCW 41.80.020. The obligation to bargain does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or to make a concession, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

(3) "Commission" means the public employment relations commission.

(4) "Confidential employee" means an employee who, in the regular course of his or her duties, assists in a confidential capacity persons who formulate, determine, and effectuate management policies with regard to labor relations or who, in the regular course of his or her duties, has authorized access to information relating to the effectuation or review of the employer's collective bargaining policies, or who assists or aids a manager. "Confidential employee" also includes employees who assist assistant attorneys general who advise and represent managers or confidential employees in personnel or labor relations matters, or who advise or represent the state in tort actions.

(5) "Director" means the director of the public employment relations commission.

(6) "Employee" means any employee, including employees whose work has ceased in connection with the pursuit of lawful activities protected by this chapter, covered by chapter 41.06 RCW, except:

(a) Employees covered for collective bargaining by chapter 41.56 RCW;

(b) Confidential employees;

(c) Members of the Washington management service;

(d) Internal auditors in any agency; or

(e) Any employee of the commission, the office of financial management, or the office of risk management within the department of enterprise services.

(7) "Employee organization" means any organization, union, or association in which employees participate and that exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of collective bargaining with employers.

(8) "Employer" means the state of Washington.

(9) "Exclusive bargaining representative" means any employee organization that has been certified under this chapter as the representative of the employees in an appropriate bargaining unit.

(10) "Institutions of higher education" means the University of Washington, Washington State University, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Western Washington University, The Evergreen State College, and the various state community colleges.

(11) "Labor dispute" means any controversy concerning terms, tenure, or conditions of employment, or concerning the association or representation of persons in negotiating, fixing, maintaining, changing, or seeking to arrange terms or conditions of employment with respect to the subjects of bargaining provided in this chapter, regardless of whether the disputants stand in the proximate relation of employer and employee.

(12) "Manager" means "manager" as defined in RCW 41.06.022.

(13) "Supervisor" means an employee who has authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, direct, reward, or discipline employees, or to adjust employee grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if the exercise of the authority is not of a merely routine nature but requires the consistent exercise of individual judgment. However, no employee who is a member of the Washington management service may be included in a collective bargaining unit established under this section.

(14) "Unfair labor practice" means any unfair labor practice listed in RCW 41.80.110.

**Sec.**  RCW 41.80.010 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 23 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) For the purpose of negotiating collective bargaining agreements under this chapter, the employer shall be represented by the governor or governor's designee, except as provided for institutions of higher education in subsection (4) of this section.

(2)(a) Except as otherwise provided, if an exclusive bargaining representative represents more than one bargaining unit, the exclusive bargaining representative shall negotiate with each employer representative as designated in subsection (1) of this section one master collective bargaining agreement on behalf of all the employees in bargaining units that the exclusive bargaining representative represents. For those exclusive bargaining representatives who represent fewer than a total of five hundred employees each, negotiation shall be by a coalition of all those exclusive bargaining representatives. The coalition shall bargain for a master collective bargaining agreement covering all of the employees represented by the coalition. The governor's designee and the exclusive bargaining representative or representatives are authorized to enter into supplemental bargaining of agency-specific issues for inclusion in or as an addendum to the master collective bargaining agreement, subject to the parties' agreement regarding the issues and procedures for supplemental bargaining. This section does not prohibit cooperation and coordination of bargaining between two or more exclusive bargaining representatives.

(b) This subsection (2) does not apply to exclusive bargaining representatives who represent employees of institutions of higher education, except when the institution of higher education has elected to exercise its option under subsection (4) of this section to have its negotiations conducted by the governor or governor's designee under the procedures provided for general government agencies in subsections (1) through (3) of this section.

(c) If five hundred or more employees of an independent state elected official listed in RCW 43.01.010 are organized in a bargaining unit or bargaining units under RCW 41.80.070, the official shall be consulted by the governor or the governor's designee before any agreement is reached under (a) of this subsection concerning supplemental bargaining of agency specific issues affecting the employees in such bargaining unit.

(d) For assistant attorneys general, the governor or the governor's designee and an exclusive bargaining representative shall negotiate one master collective bargaining agreement.

(3) The governor shall submit a request for funds necessary to implement the compensation and fringe benefit provisions in the master collective bargaining agreement or for legislation necessary to implement the agreement. Requests for funds necessary to implement the provisions of bargaining agreements shall not be submitted to the legislature by the governor unless such requests:

(a) Have been submitted to the director of the office of financial management by October 1 prior to the legislative session at which the requests are to be considered; and

(b) Have been certified by the director of the office of financial management as being feasible financially for the state.

The legislature shall approve or reject the submission of the request for funds as a whole. The legislature shall not consider a request for funds to implement a collective bargaining agreement unless the request is transmitted to the legislature as part of the governor's budget document submitted under RCW 43.88.030 and 43.88.060. If the legislature rejects or fails to act on the submission, either party may reopen all or part of the agreement or the exclusive bargaining representative may seek to implement the procedures provided for in RCW 41.80.090.

(4)(a)(i) For the purpose of negotiating agreements for institutions of higher education, the employer shall be the respective governing board of each of the universities, colleges, or community colleges or a designee chosen by the board to negotiate on its behalf.

(ii) A governing board of a university or college may elect to have its negotiations conducted by the governor or governor's designee under the procedures provided for general government agencies in subsections (1) through (3) of this section, except that:

(A) The governor or the governor's designee and an exclusive bargaining representative shall negotiate one master collective bargaining agreement for all of the bargaining units of employees of a university or college that the representative represents; or

(B) If the parties mutually agree, the governor or the governor's designee and an exclusive bargaining representative shall negotiate one master collective bargaining agreement for all of the bargaining units of employees of more than one university or college that the representative represents.

(iii) A governing board of a community college may elect to have its negotiations conducted by the governor or governor's designee under the procedures provided for general government agencies in subsections (1) through (3) of this section.

(b) Prior to entering into negotiations under this chapter, the institutions of higher education or their designees shall consult with the director of the office of financial management regarding financial and budgetary issues that are likely to arise in the impending negotiations.

(c)(i) In the case of bargaining agreements reached between institutions of higher education other than the University of Washington and exclusive bargaining representatives agreed to under the provisions of this chapter, if appropriations are necessary to implement the compensation and fringe benefit provisions of the bargaining agreements, the governor shall submit a request for such funds to the legislature according to the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, except as provided in (c)(iii) of this subsection.

(ii) In the case of bargaining agreements reached between the University of Washington and exclusive bargaining representatives agreed to under the provisions of this chapter, if appropriations are necessary to implement the compensation and fringe benefit provisions of a bargaining agreement, the governor shall submit a request for such funds to the legislature according to the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, except as provided in this subsection (4)(c)(ii) and as provided in (c)(iii) of this subsection.

(A) If appropriations of less than ten thousand dollars are necessary to implement the provisions of a bargaining agreement, a request for such funds shall not be submitted to the legislature by the governor unless the request has been submitted to the director of the office of financial management by October 1 prior to the legislative session at which the request is to be considered.

(B) If appropriations of ten thousand dollars or more are necessary to implement the provisions of a bargaining agreement, a request for such funds shall not be submitted to the legislature by the governor unless the request:

(I) Has been submitted to the director of the office of financial management by October 1 prior to the legislative session at which the request is to be considered; and

(II) Has been certified by the director of the office of financial management as being feasible financially for the state.

(C) If the director of the office of financial management does not certify a request under (c)(ii)(B) of this subsection as being feasible financially for the state, the parties shall enter into collective bargaining solely for the purpose of reaching a mutually agreed upon modification of the agreement necessary to address the absence of those requested funds. The legislature may act upon the compensation and fringe benefit provisions of the modified collective bargaining agreement if those provisions are agreed upon and submitted to the office of financial management and legislative budget committees before final legislative action on the biennial or supplemental operating budget by the sitting legislature.

(iii) In the case of a bargaining unit of employees of institutions of higher education in which the exclusive bargaining representative is certified during or after the conclusion of a legislative session, the legislature may act upon the compensation and fringe benefit provisions of the unit's initial collective bargaining agreement if those provisions are agreed upon and submitted to the office of financial management and legislative budget committees before final legislative action on the biennial or supplemental operating budget by the sitting legislature.

(5) If, after the compensation and fringe benefit provisions of an agreement are approved by the legislature, a significant revenue shortfall occurs resulting in reduced appropriations, as declared by proclamation of the governor or by resolution of the legislature, both parties shall immediately enter into collective bargaining for a mutually agreed upon modification of the agreement.

(6) After the expiration date of a collective bargaining agreement negotiated under this chapter, all of the terms and conditions specified in the collective bargaining agreement remain in effect until the effective date of a subsequently negotiated agreement, not to exceed one year from the expiration date stated in the agreement. Thereafter, the employer may unilaterally implement according to law.

(7) For the 2013‑2015 fiscal biennium, a collective bargaining agreement related to employee health care benefits negotiated between the employer and coalition pursuant to RCW 41.80.020(3) regarding the dollar amount expended on behalf of each employee shall be a separate agreement for which the governor may request funds necessary to implement the agreement. The legislature may act upon a 2013‑2015 collective bargaining agreement related to employee health care benefits if an agreement is reached and submitted to the office of financial management and legislative budget committees before final legislative action on the biennial or supplemental operating appropriations act by the sitting legislature.

(8)(a) For the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, the governor may request funds to implement:

(i) Modifications to collective bargaining agreements as set forth in a memorandum of understanding negotiated between the employer and the service employees international union healthcare 1199nw, an exclusive bargaining representative, that was necessitated by an emergency situation or an imminent jeopardy determination by the center for medicare and medicaid services that relates to the safety or health of the clients, employees, or both the clients and employees.

(ii) Unilaterally implemented modifications to collective bargaining agreements, resulting from the employer being prohibited from negotiating with an exclusive bargaining representative due to a pending representation petition, necessitated by an emergency situation or an imminent jeopardy determination by the center for medicare and medicaid services that relates to the safety or health of the clients, employees, or both the clients and employees.

(iii) Modifications to collective bargaining agreements as set forth in a memorandum of understanding negotiated between the employer and the union of physicians of Washington, an exclusive bargaining representative, that was necessitated by an emergency situation or an imminent jeopardy determination by the center for medicare and medicaid services that relates to the safety or health of the clients, employees, or both the clients and employees. If the memorandum of understanding submitted to the legislature as part of the governor's budget document is rejected by the legislature, and the parties reach a new memorandum of understanding by June 30, 2016, within the funds, conditions, and limitations provided in section 204, chapter 36, Laws of 2016 sp. sess., the new memorandum of understanding shall be considered approved by the legislature and may be retroactive to December 1, 2015.

(iv) Modifications to collective bargaining agreements as set forth in a memorandum of understanding negotiated between the employer and the teamsters union local 117, an exclusive bargaining representative, for salary adjustments for the state employee job classifications of psychiatrist, psychiatric social worker, and psychologist.

(b) For the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, the legislature may act upon the request for funds for modifications to a 2015-2017 collective bargaining agreement under (a)(i), (ii), (iii), and (iv) of this subsection if funds are requested by the governor before final legislative action on the supplemental omnibus appropriations act by the sitting legislature.

(c) The request for funding made under this subsection and any action by the legislature taken pursuant to this subsection is limited to the modifications described in this subsection and may not otherwise affect the original terms of the 2015-2017 collective bargaining agreement.

(d) Subsection (3)(a) and (b) of this section do not apply to requests for funding made pursuant to this subsection.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.10.070 and 1965 c 8 s 43.10.070 are each amended to read as follows:

Subject to any collective bargaining agreement, the attorney general shall fix the compensation of all assistants, attorneys, and employees, and in the event they are assigned to any department, board, or commission, such department, board, or commission shall pay the compensation as fixed by the attorney general, not however in excess of the amount made available to the department by law for legal services.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.10.060 and 2009 c 549 s 5049 are each amended to read as follows:

The attorney general may appoint necessary assistants((~~, who shall hold office at his or her pleasure, and~~)) who shall have the power to perform any act which the attorney general is authorized by law to perform. Subject to any collective bargaining agreement, assistants shall hold office at the attorney general's pleasure.

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