

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5831

As Passed Senate, March 5, 2019

Title: An act relating to an employer's payment of indebtedness.

Brief Description: Concerning an employer's payment of indebtedness.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Van De Wege, Salomon and Saldaña.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Commerce: 2/19/19 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 3/05/19, 47-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Raises the amount of indebtedness owing that can be paid to the survivors of a deceased employee by a private employer.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Conway, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Braun, Saldaña, Walsh and Wellman.

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7461)

Background: Following an employee's death, a private employer is required to pay a deceased employee's survivors amounts owed to the decedent, if:

- the amount is owed for the deceased employee's work, up to a limit of \$2,500;
- the surviving spouse requests payment of the amount due; and
- no executor or administrator of the deceased employee's estate has been appointed.

If there is no surviving spouse, the monies are paid upon request of any child or children, or if none, upon the request of a parent.

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.

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.

There is no statutory limit on the payments made by the state and municipal corporations for indebtedness owing to survivors of a deceased employee.

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

Summary of Bill: The amount of indebtedness owing that can be paid to the survivors of a decedent employee by a private employer is raised from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The bill simply raises the amount of monies that can be paid to the spouse or family of a deceased employee from \$2,500 to \$10,000. Last year the committee amended this provision to allow the state and local governments to pay any amounts owing for wages under similar circumstances.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Karen Keiser, Prime Sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.