S-4258.1

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5835**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Labor, Commerce & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Senators Saldaña, Keiser, Nguyen, Nobles, Stanford, and C. Wilson)

AN ACT Relating to a work group to study the disparity in worker's compensation benefits based on marital status; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department of labor and industries must study:

(a) The impacts to Washington's workers' compensation funds provided for in chapter 51.44 RCW, the workers' compensation premium rates, and self-insurers if the law is amended to provide the same worker's compensation benefits to unmarried injured workers as is currently provided to married injured workers;

(b) The existing and prior Washington laws, rules, and case law governing these workers;

(c) The workers' compensation laws and regulations of other states governing benefit payments to married and unmarried injured workers; and

(d) Any other information the department deems relevant.

(2) By December 1, 2022, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department of labor and industries must report to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature, providing:

(a) The impacts described in subsection (1)(a) of this section;

(b) A summary of the history of any Washington laws and the workers' compensation laws and regulations of other states described in subsection (1)(b) and (c) of this section and any other relevant information; and

(c) Any recommendations for how the statutes and rules may be amended to address the disparity of benefits paid based on marital status while limiting adverse impacts to Washington's workers' compensation funds and the workers' compensation premium rates.

(3) While the department of labor and industries is conducting the study, the department must meet at least three times with a representative of the largest business association and a representative of labor organization to discuss the information gathered by the department.

(4) This section expires December 31, 2022.

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