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## Labor & Workplace Standards Committee

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### HB 1455

**Brief Description:** Concerning the use of social security numbers by the department of labor and industries and the employment security department.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Mosbrucker, Boehnke, Young, Sutherland and Jacobsen.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Employment Security Department and the Department of Labor and Industries to examine their practices of disclosing individuals' full social security numbers (SNNs) in agency correspondences with nongovernmental third parties.
- Requires the agencies, under certain circumstances, to institute procedures to replace the use of full SSNs.

**Hearing Date:** 2/9/21

**Staff:** Trudes Tango (786-7384).

#### Background:

For purposes of the unemployment insurance system, administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD), employers must report certain information about their employees, including social security numbers (SSNs), to the ESD. The ESD uses SSNs to, among other things, verify a person's employment and verify that unemployment insurance benefits are being charged to the appropriate employer.

The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) also requires SSNs for certain purposes related to

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workers' compensation and prevailing wage requirements. For example, contractors on public works projects must provide certified payroll records to L&I that include employee SSNs, as part of L&I's verification and investigation process into potential prevailing wage laws violations.

Generally, both federal and state laws prohibit commercial entities and state and local governments from disclosing the SSNs of individuals, unless otherwise allowed by law. A person's SSN is also one of the pieces of information exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act.

**Summary of Bill:**

The ESD and the L&I must examine their current practices that involve disclosing full SSNs of persons in their correspondences with nongovernmental third parties, such as employers. If disclosure of full SSNs is not required by the federal government for compliance with any federal program administered by the agency, the agency must:

- institute procedures to replace the use of full SSNs with other forms of personal identifiers in its correspondence with nongovernmental third parties; and
- by January 1, 2022, cease disclosing the full SSNs of persons in its correspondence with nongovernmental third parties.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 02/03/2021.

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