

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5468

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Ways & Means, February 24, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to ensuring that firefighters who accept promotional firefighter positions within a fire department remain members of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system.

**Brief Description:** Ensuring that firefighters who accept promotional firefighter positions within a fire department remain members of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system.

**Sponsors:** Senators Van De Wege, Holy, Conway, Lovick, Nguyen, Randall and Valdez.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ways & Means: 1/31/23, 2/24/23 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Expands the definition of firefighter, for inclusion in the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System to include any person who is serving in a position that requires an experienced firefighter.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rolfes, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair, Operating & Revenue; Mullet, Vice Chair, Capital; Wilson, L., Ranking Member, Operating; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Member, Operating; Schoesler, Ranking Member, Capital; Rivers, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Billig, Boehnke, Braun, Conway, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Muzzall, Nguyen, Pedersen, Saldaña, Torres, Van De Wege, Wagoner and Wellman.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Staff:** Amanda Cecil (786-7460)

**Background:** The Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF) provides retirement benefits to full-time, fully-compensated law enforcement officers and fire fighters employed by the state, cities, counties, and special districts.

In addition to being full-time and fully compensated in order to be covered by LEOFF as a firefighter, the person must also be actively employed as a firefighter, employed in a supervisory firefighter position, or be employed by a fire department as an emergency medical technician.

**Summary of Bill:** The definition of firefighter, for inclusion in LEOFF, is expanded to include any person who is serving in a position that requires an experienced firefighter.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**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 Department of Retirement Systems has threatened to take people in admin work and put them into a different pension system. This bill would ensure that they do not. There is an assumption that experienced firefighters who move into a position that does not respond to calls would be moved to a new pension system. This assumption is problematic as it creates a huge disadvantage to candidates applying to those positions. Firefighters need to be able to move freely between positions to ensure a stable workforce in all positions, without concerns over pension systems.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Kevin Van De Wege, Prime Sponsor; Bud Sizemore, WSCFF.

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