

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5808

C 124 L 24
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Granting interest arbitration to certain public safety telecommunicators.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Van De Wege, Lovick, Conway, Trudeau, Nguyen, Kuderer, Randall, Dhingra, Hunt, Valdez, Keiser, Stanford, Lias, Hasegawa, Shewmake, Mullet, Nobles and Salomon).

Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce
House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards

Background: The Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act. The Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA) provides for collective bargaining of wages, hours, and working conditions with employees of cities, counties, and other political subdivisions, as well as to certain employees of institutions of higher education. For certain uniformed personnel under PECBA, there is a public policy against strikes as a means of settling labor disputes. To resolve impasses over contract negotiations with these personnel, PECBA requires binding interest arbitration if negotiations for a contract reach an impasse and cannot be resolved through mediation. Under interest arbitration, an impartial third-party makes decisions regarding the unresolved terms of the contract. There are statutory procedures for parties to select arbitrators and factors the arbitration panel must consider when making its decision.

Public Safety Telecommunicators. In 2022, the Legislature established a certification board to create a statewide certification and training program for public safety telecommunicators. A public safety telecommunicator is a first responder working in a primary public safety answering point, regardless of title, who has successfully completed the state training, certification, or recertification standards. This includes an employee of the state, a local public agency, or an independent governmental agency whose primary responsibility is to receive, process, transmit, or dispatch 911 emergency and nonemergency calls for law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and other public safety services by telephone, radio, or other communication devices and includes an individual who promoted from this position and supervises individuals who perform these functions.

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.

Summary: The interest arbitration procedures for uniformed personnel under PECBA are applied to public safety telecommunicators employed by public employers. The bill does not apply to public safety telecommunicators employed by the Washington State Patrol or any other state agency.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 48 0

House 92 0

Effective: June 6, 2024