
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2097

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By House Labor & Workplace Standards (originally sponsored by Representatives Berry, Ortiz-Self, Reed, Simmons, Ormsby, Ramel, Fosse, Goodman, Lekanoff, Doglio, Pollet, and Kloba)

READ FIRST TIME 01/26/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to assisting workers in recovering wages owed;
2 adding a new section to chapter 49.48 RCW; and providing an
3 expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 49.48
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The department of labor and industries shall convene a work
8 group to develop and recommend strategies that help employees who are
9 owed wages recover those wages and be made whole as quickly and as
10 fully as possible when the employees' employers violate provisions
11 under this chapter or the minimum wage act.

12 (2) The work group shall identify options to enhance the
13 department of labor and industries' ability to provide swift relief
14 to employees. Options the work group must explore include, but are
15 not limited to:

16 (a) A wage recovery program or a wage recovery fund; and

17 (b) Procedures and mechanisms used in other states that ensure
18 full and timely recovery for employees and that deter future
19 violations.

20 (3) (a) Recommendations from the work group must be made by
21 consensus, if possible. If consensus cannot be reached,

1 recommendations of the work group must reflect the view of the
2 majority of the members. Members with dissenting views may include
3 their recommendations or feedback as a supplement to the report
4 required by this section.

5 (b) For each recommendation, the work group must identify and
6 address implementation issues and assess feasibility.

7 (4) The work group must include representatives from the
8 following:

9 (a) Two representatives from employee advocacy organizations;

10 (b) Two representatives from employer and business advocacy
11 organizations, with one of the members representing small employers;

12 (c) One representative from a civil legal aid organization; and

13 (d) One expert in employment and wage and hour law from a
14 Washington state postsecondary education institution.

15 (5) The department shall provide staff support to the work group
16 as needed. The work group may consult with additional representatives
17 from other organizations and experts specializing in the subject
18 matter, as needed.

19 (6) The work group must submit a report with recommendations to
20 the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2025.

21 (7) This section expires December 1, 2026.

--- END ---