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**Labor & Workplace Standards  
Committee**

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**SSB 5972**

**Brief Description:** Expanding the definition of uniformed personnel regarding correctional officers for purposes of interest arbitration.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Stanford, Conway and Hasegawa).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Expands interest arbitration to correctional employees of city or county jails by removing the provision limiting interest arbitration to correctional employees employed by a county with a population of 70,000 or more.

**Hearing Date:** 2/18/26

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

**Background:**

Employees of cities, counties, and other political subdivisions of the state bargain their wages and working conditions under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). For certain uniformed personnel, the 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.

Uniformed personnel include, among others, correctional employees who are uniformed and

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non-uniformed, commissioned and non-commissioned security personnel employed in a jail by a county with a population of 70,000 or more. Other correctional employees with interest arbitration include those employed in regional jails and in juvenile detention facilities that are located in a county with a population over 1.5 million.

**Summary of Bill:**

The limitation requiring correctional employees of jails to be employed by a county with a population of more than 70,000 to be eligible for interest arbitration is removed. Correctional employees who are uniformed and non-uniformed, commissioned and non-commissioned security personnel employed in a jail are eligible for interest arbitration.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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