

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5653

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Labor & Commerce, February 21, 2025

Title: An act relating to collective bargaining by fish and wildlife officers.

Brief Description: Concerning collective bargaining by fish and wildlife officers.

Sponsors: Senators Chapman, Hasegawa, MacEwen and Nobles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Commerce: 2/17/25, 2/21/25 [DP-WM, DNP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Includes lieutenants and captains in the Department of Fish and Wildlife officers that are eligible for interest arbitration under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Saldaña, Chair; Conway, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Alvarado, MacEwen, Ramos and Stanford.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Schoesler.

Staff: Jarrett Sacks (786-7448)

Background: 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. Officers of the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and Department of Fish

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and Wildlife (DFW) also bargain under PECBA.

For certain uniformed personnel, PECBA requires binding interest arbitration if negotiations for a contract reach 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. The interest arbitration provisions of PECBA also apply to officers of WSP and DWF officers.

Under PECBA, a DFW officer is a person appointed and commissioned by the director of DFW who ranks below lieutenant and includes officers, detectives, and sergeants.

Summary of Bill: Lieutenants and captains are added to the DFW officers that are eligible for interest arbitration under PECBA.

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 bill is a technical cleanup that allows lieutenants and captains the same rights as those who rank below them. The entire rank system was reclassified and are no longer Washington Management Service and, because they do not have interest arbitration, they have to bargain as part of the coalition. This makes it difficult to bargain over duty-specific provisions. The bill will put lieutenants and captains in the correct bargaining unit.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Christopher (Kit) Rosenberger, Fish and Wildlife Lieutenants and Captains Association.

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