



BILL: **HB 2242**
Committee: Senate Business and Transportation
Date: April 25, 2013
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Subject:

HB 2242 amends ORS 657.010(1) where it defines a “base year” for purposes of determining whether someone has a valid claim for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits.

Introduction:

When someone files a claim for UI benefits, the Employment Department looks at a set period of time, called the “base year,” to determine if the person worked enough to have a valid claim for UI benefits. If the person does not have a valid claim, they are moved to an “alternate base year” claim. HB 2242 makes a technical amendment that allows the Department to more efficiently administer the program without impacting any person’s eligibility for benefits.

Discussion:

ORS 657.010 defines a “base year” period, which is generally the first four of the five most recently completed calendar quarters. If a person does not have sufficient earnings during that time period to have a valid UI claim, however, the law requires the Employment Department to instead convert the claim to an “alternate base year” period – the four most recently completed calendar quarters. Oregon statute requires this even if the person does not also have a valid alternate base year period claim.

This results in unnecessary administrative effort on the part of the Employment Department. This can also create confusion for claimants to understand why the Department would move them from one invalid claim to another invalid claim.

This bill amends ORS 657.010 so that people are moved to an alternate base year claim only if they would actually have a valid alternative base year claim. This will not change who is eligible for benefits and it does not impact the ability of people to challenge Employment Department decisions about whether they have a valid claim. HB 2242 merely saves some administrative time and expense for the Department while reducing some potentially confusing notices to people claiming benefits.

Summary:

HB 2242 is a technical change to the statute that increases our administrative efficiency without impacting who is eligible, or not eligible, for UI benefits.