

**HB 2181 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**House Committee On Business and Labor**

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**Prepared By:** Jan Nordlund, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 2/13

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Establishes claim employer discharged, discriminated or retaliated against employee within 90 days of employee's wage claim or participation in related proceeding is true unless proven otherwise. Allows court to award punitive damages and right to jury trial when employee files civil suit alleging discrimination or retaliation in response to employee's wage claim. Requires employer to provide written reason for employee's termination within 10 days of written request.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

An employee who claims they suffered discrimination or retaliation for filing a wage claim or for participating in a wage claim proceeding can take their employer to court or file a complaint with the Bureau of Labor and Industries. The court may provide injunctive relief, equitable relief, and compensatory damages; the court may also award the prevailing party costs and reasonable attorney fees. House Bill 2181 allows the court to also award punitive damages and the right to a jury trial. The measure places the burden of proof on the employer when the employee claims they suffered discrimination or retaliation within 90 days of making a wage complaint or participating in protected wage-related activities.