

## **HB 2660 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **House Committee On Business and Labor**

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**Meeting Dates:** 2/4, 3/4

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Prohibits employers who directly reimburse unemployment insurance benefits from from advising or communicating a conclusion to an employee about unemployment insurance eligibility. Requires reimbursable employers to provide employees with information provided by Employment Department to employer regarding benefit eligibility. Allows reimbursable employers to provide employees with any other information approved by Department regarding benefit eligibility. Allows eligible, unemployed maintenance and janitorial employees of educational institutions and institutions of higher education to receive unemployment benefits during summer breaks, customary vacation periods, and holiday recesses. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Effect of inaccurate information shared by employer regarding benefit eligibility
- Year-round employment of janitorial and maintenance staff
- Impact on school district budgets
- Benefit eligibility requirements to actively seek employment and willingness to accept offer
- Likelihood of school furloughing worker if benefits must be reimbursed

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

-1 Removes emergency clause. Provides that any provision of Act or related administrative rule if determined to be out of conformity with federal laws will no longer be in effect.

Revenue impact statement issued.

Fiscal impact statement issued.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The unemployment insurance (UI) program has special provisions that apply to people who work for educational institutions, generally restricting employees from receiving UI benefits during school breaks, including summer break. Federal law affords little flexibility to states in applying those laws to employees performing instructional, research or principal administrative work (“instructional work”), but provides more flexibility on their application to people who perform other types of services, such as bus drivers, janitorial workers and school nurses.

House Bill 2660 allows janitorial and maintenance employees of public and nonprofit educational institutions to receive unemployment insurance, if standard eligibility requirements are met, during school breaks, vacations, and holidays in situations where the employee has a reasonable assurance of returning to work after the break.

For employers who directly reimburse the Employment Department for unemployment insurance benefits paid to former employees, House Bill 2660 specifies what information can and cannot be provided to employees regarding benefit eligibility. Employers who reimburse are either a nonprofit, state or local government, or an Indian tribe.