

SB 1702 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On The Second Special Session of 2020

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Meeting Dates: 8/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows unemployment insurance benefits to be paid to those who work in public and non-profit educational institutions and institutions of higher education in roles other than instruction, research, or principal administration for periods of unemployment between academic years or terms and during customary vacation periods and holiday recesses. Applies to weeks beginning on or after May 1, 2020, and ending before December 1, 2020. Provides that any provision of Act or related administrative rule determined to be out of conformity with federal laws will no longer be in effect. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The unemployment insurance (UI) program has special provisions applying to people who work for public or non-profit educational institutions, generally restricting employees from receiving UI benefits during school breaks, including summer break when they have a reasonable assurance of returning to work. Federal law affords little flexibility to states in applying those laws to employees performing instructional, research, or principal administrative work, but provides greater flexibility on their application to people who perform other types of services, such as bus drivers, food service, janitorial workers, and school nurses. If the state is found to be out of conformity with federal regulations, employers will be subject to a higher unemployment insurance tax and the state risks losing federal funds for administering the program.

Senate Bill 1702, if deemed in conformity with federal UI law, will allow employees of educational institutions and institutions of higher education who are not instructors, researchers, or principal administrators to receive unemployment insurance during school breaks and holidays even if they have a reasonable assurance of returning to work. The worker would still need to meet all other eligibility requirements in order to receive unemployment insurance benefits. The provisions apply to weeks beginning on or after May 1, 2020, and ending before December 1, 2020.