

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5808

As of February 20, 2003

Title: An act relating to making interest arbitration panel determinations.

Brief Description: Making interest arbitration panel determinations.

Sponsors: Senators Morton, Sheahan, Honeyford, Deccio, Hewitt and Mulliken.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Trade: 2/21/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & TRADE

Staff: Elizabeth Mitchell (786-7430)

Background: "Uniformed personnel" are defined as certain law enforcement officers, firefighters, security forces for the protection of nuclear power plants, peace officers employed by certain port districts, and advanced life support technicians.

If there is an impasse in negotiations about wages, hours and working conditions between uniformed employees and their employers, an interest arbitration panel makes a determination regarding the dispute.

Interest arbitration panels must consider several factors when making decisions regarding uniformed employee disputes. These factors include average consumer prices for goods and services and wages, working hours, and conditions of "like employees." For some uniformed personnel types, these "like employees" include employees throughout the west coast, and for other uniformed personnel types, these "like employees" include only employees in the state of Washington.

Employees of a public passenger transportation system of a metropolitan municipal corporation, county transportation authority, public transportation benefit area, or city public passenger transportation system may also have their labor disputes resolved by an interest arbitration panel.

Summary of Bill: For the purposes of interest arbitration panel determinations, wages, hours and working condition comparisons for all uniformed employees must be based on like personnel in Washington when an adequate number of comparable employees exists in the state.

When making its determination for disputes involving both uniformed personnel and transportation employees, an interest arbitration panel must consider the percentage change in the implicit price deflator for the preceding year. The panel must give substantial weight to internal equity and local labor market considerations when making economic determinations.

When making its determination for both uniformed personnel and transportation employees, an interest arbitration panel must take into consideration the financial ability of the public employer to meet the costs of the parties' proposals without requiring the reduction of programs or staff, and giving due consideration to the other services provided by the public employer.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.