

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3063

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to the leave sharing program.

Brief Description: Establishing the number of days of shared leave an employee is eligible to receive.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt, Williams and Simpson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/29/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the number of days of shared leave an employee with at least 10 years of service may receive.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Flannigan, Hurst, Miloscia and Taylor.

Staff: Tracey O'Brien (786-7196).

Background:

In 1989 the Legislature enacted the Washington State Leave Sharing Program (Program) for state employees. The stated purpose of the Program is to permit state employees to donate annual leave, sick leave, or personal holidays to fellow state employees who are suffering from, or have relatives or household members who are suffering from, an extraordinary or severe illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that has caused or is likely to cause the employee to take leave without pay or terminate his or her employment. This program also permits shared leave for an employee who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. An employee called to military service may also be granted

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shared leave. In addition, shared leave may be authorized for emergency volunteer service connected with state or federally declared emergencies anywhere in the United States when the emergency volunteer service would cause the employee to take leave without pay or to terminate state employment, and the employee has depleted, or will shortly deplete, his or her annual and sick leave reserves. Qualifying employees must have skills necessary for the humanitarian relief organized and have been accepted as a volunteer by either a governmental or nonprofit organization engaged in that effort.

As long as a certain balance is maintained, an employee may transfer annual leave, sick leave, or all of his or her personal holiday to an employee in the Program.

If an employee qualifies to participate in the Program, the agency head determines the amount of leave, not to exceed 261 days, that the employee may receive. The agency head also determines when the leave is no longer needed or will not be needed at a future time in connection with the illness or injury for which it was granted.

Summary of Bill:

The amount of shared leave a qualifying employee may be authorized by the agency head to receive is adjusted. For an employee with fewer than 10 years of service, he or she may still only receive a maximum of 261 days. For an employee with at least 10 years but fewer than 20 years of service, he or she may receive a maximum of 522 days. For an employee with 20 or more years of service, he or she may receive 783 days of shared leave. Shared leave received under the Uniform Service Shared Leave Pool is not subject to these limits.

The director of the Department of Personnel is authorized to adopt rules to implement this act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill cost so little, but does so much good. The Program allows employees to continue to work despite a major illness or other qualified event. It is a voluntary donation system and qualification for the Program is subject to the supervisor's discretion. Fellow employees can compassionately share leave in order to retain valuable experienced coworkers. In fact, the state is going to pay for the leave hours regardless of who uses the hours. Advances in medical treatments allow people to live longer and better lives with illness. However, these advances come with costs. This Program permits individuals to

work a reduced schedule or take time to recover while still drawing salary and benefits. By increasing the contribution limits, we will retain state workers who have historical and institutional knowledge.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Alia Griffing, Washington Federation of State Employees; Andrew McMillan; and Gordon White, Department of Ecology.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.