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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ...
PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2011-12

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Labor, Public Safety, and Urban
Affairs (SC-LPSUA)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

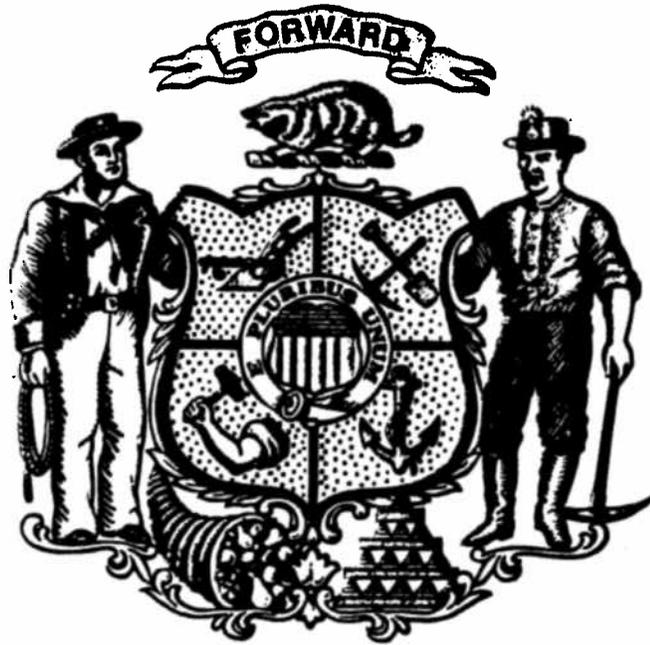
- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

* Contents organized for archiving by: Mike Barman (LRB) (July/2012)

No Senate
RCP



Department of Workforce Development
Unemployment Insurance Division
Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council
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Madison, WI 53708-8942
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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Scott Walker, Governor
Reginald J. Newson, Secretary
Craig Barkelar, Division Administrator

January 17, 2012

Representative Joan Ballweg
Chair, Assembly Committee on Labor
and Workforce Development
State Capitol, Room 19
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Subject: Unemployment law changes

Dear Representative Ballweg:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, we thank you for your interest in the unemployment insurance program, for taking the time to develop Assembly Bill 457 containing unemployment law changes and for your presentation of AB 457 to the Advisory Council at its meeting on Thursday, January 12, 2012. We appreciate your interest in working with the UI Advisory Council for the benefit of employees, employers, and the economic stability of our state.

This letter provides an initial response to your proposals and to advise you of other developments and agreements by the members of the Council.

The Council also wishes to express its appreciation to Representative Mark Honadel and Representative Mark Pocan, each of whom appeared at the January 12 meeting and presented bills they are sponsoring, AB 450 / SB 352 (special occupational training for unemployment benefit claimants) and AB 462 / SB 346 (benefits for nonstriking employees), respectively.

As you know, the Council had received a presentation of Representative Honadel's proposal on August 24, 2011 and on September 22, 2011, voted to support the concept. On January 12, the Council voted approval of the bill, AB 450, by a 9-0 vote.

At the January 12 meeting, the Council agreed to support two parts of AB 457:

1. Reduction of the rate of interest on delinquent contributions.
2. Requirement that UI administrative law judges follow the federal and state UI law.

Also on January 12, the Council approved law changes proposed by the Department of Workforce Development:

1. Assure a limit on eligibility for benefits when a claimant leaves the country for more than 48 hours.

2. Permit the department to access not only former UI ALJs but also the general market for attorneys and retired judges when seeking to fill temporary UI ALJ positions.
3. Assure that on and after October 21, 2013, a 15% penalty on fraudulent overpayment of benefits would flow to the Reserve Fund, as required by federal law.

In addition, at its January 12 meeting the Council discussed and carefully considered the several other elements of AB 457 as well as AB 462. The Council will need additional time to consider these proposals and intends to resume discussion of each of them at the next meeting of the UI Advisory Council, which is scheduled for Thursday, February 2 at 9:30 a.m.

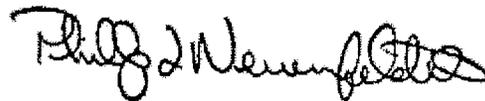
For many decades, the legislature passed the "agreed on" recommendations of the UI Advisory Council without amendment. This occurred during periods when Republicans controlled both houses, Democrats controlled both houses and when control was split between the parties. While the "agreed on" bill process can be frustrating at times – because it is hard to get agreement on dramatic changes – that frustration generally is on the side of the majority party at the time because they can not get all of the policy changes they desire even though they might have the votes. This process moderates policy shifts in the program, enhancing stability and predictability.

As a result we hope you will support the "agreed on" bill provisions negotiated by the UI Advisory Council when they come to the legislature and pass them without amendment. We will advise you of the status of our discussions following our February 2 meeting. Thank you again for your support of the Council process.

Sincerely,



James Buchen
Senior Vice President, Government Relations
Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce



Phil Neuenfeldt
President
Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

cc: Senator Van Wanggaard,
Chair Senate Labor Committee
Representative Mark Pocan
Representative Mark Honadel



Vincent Williams
Committee Clerk