

Fiscal Estimate Narratives
OSER 1/16/2004

LRB Number 03-3910/1	Introduction Number SB-362	Estimate Type Original
Subject State employee travel; earned annual leave; supplemental credits for the purchase of health insurance		

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill implements changes in employee benefits programs negotiated in collective bargaining of the 2003-05 state employee labor contracts, and provides parity to nonrepresented employees. The bill also updates and clarifies statutes relating to state employee travel and relocation expenses.

(1) The bill provides that the surviving insured dependents of any state employee who dies while employed by the state, and state employees who are laid off and their surviving insured dependents, are eligible to purchase health insurance with supplemental health insurance conversion credits (SHICC) if the employee has attained at least 15 years of creditable adjusted continuous state service. State employees with 20 or more years of WRS (Wisconsin Retirement System) creditable service are already eligible to use SHICC to purchase health insurance upon retirement or voluntarily departure from state service, and their eligible survivors are entitled to use these credits if the employee dies after retiring or departing from state service.

The Department of Employee Trust Funds indicates that due to the very low incidence of these cases, these changes would not require an increase in the current state contribution rate. Please see the separate DETF fiscal estimate for further information.

(2) Employees eligible to earn annual leave at the full-time rate of 216 hours per year may elect to receive up to 120 hours each year as accumulated sabbatical or termination leave. This is an increase from the current 80 hours. Because neither the amount of annual paid leave nor the amount of paid leave that can be received by the employee as cash are increased, this provision has no fiscal impact.

(3) The bill gives state employees one additional paid personal holiday each calendar year in recognition of Veterans Day. State employees, except for limited-term employees, currently receive 3.5 paid personal holidays each calendar year. Paid personal holidays are taken at the discretion of the appointing authority and personal days earned each year are non-cumulative. Thus, the additional personal holiday is not expected to increase agency costs for overtime to retain staffing levels for critical services.

(4) The bill makes minor and technical revisions to the statutes governing state employee travel expenses and reimbursements. The bill clarifies and makes consistent the requirement that a state employee may receive payment only for actual, reasonable, and necessary travel expenses. The bill does not add or increase the travel expenses for which an employee may be reimbursed. These revisions do not have a fiscal impact.

(5) The bill makes minor and technical revisions to statutes governing state employee reimbursement for moving expenses. The bill does not increase allowable expenses, but eliminates a statutory \$600 cap for certain stipends for state employees for moving preparation. The cap instead would be established in the state compensation plan, creating the possibility of an increase or decrease in allowable expenses in the future via the compensation plan, which must be approved by JCOER. These revisions have no fiscal impact.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications