

HB 1499 -- Retirement Systems and Benefits

Sponsor: Ransdall

The bill contains provisions pertaining to medical insurance incentives for employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation who are members of the Highway and Transportation Employees' and Highway Patrol Retirement System (HTEHPRS). In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Requires current employees who are receiving creditable service and are eligible to receive a normal annuity under HTEHPRS, or a life and any temporary annuity under Missouri State Employees' Plan 2000, and whose annuity begins no later than January 1, 2005, to be eligible to receive the medical coverage contained in the bill;

(2) Does not prohibit employees who are eligible to receive lump-sum payments under Section 104.625, RSMo, or Section 104.1024, from electing to receive the payments authorized by these sections;

(3) Requires a retiree whose retirement annuity commenced on or after February 1, 2004, but no later than January 1, 2005, to be eligible to receive the medical coverage contained in the bill;

(4) Establishes a department rehiring cap of 25% for positions that are vacated due to the election to retire. Critical positions and seasonal positions may be exempt from this provision;

(5) Requires the department and HTEHPRS to provide monthly tracking of the effects of the medical coverage provided to eligible retirees and the number of retirements resulting from the plan. In addition, the bill requires the department and HTEHPRS to submit a written report to the Governor, the Commissioner of the Office of Administration, and the General Assembly by April 1, 2005. The report must examine required subject areas and the effects of the incentive provisions. The period the report must cover is February 1, 2004, to January 31, 2005;

(6) Requires the Highways and Transportation Commission to approve the retirement plan by a majority vote. The commission is required to accept or reject the plan within 30 days after the effective date of the bill. Following the vote, the commission is required to notify all department employees and retirees since February 1, 2004, of their decision;

(7) Requires any member who retires under the provisions of the

bill and who is eligible for medical coverage under the department's health care plan to be eligible to apply for coverage which allows a retiree to elect to continue coverage for himself or herself and eligible dependents at the same cost as if the retiree was an active employee. The election will cover a maximum period of five years or until the retiree is eligible for Medicare, whichever occurs first; and

(8) Requires the costs for medical coverage for eligible retirees to revert to the applicable rate after the five-year period expires or when the retiree becomes eligible for Medicare.

The bill contains an emergency clause.