

HB 758 -- TAX CREDIT FOR EMPLOYERS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

SPONSOR: Brown (50)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Job Creation and Economic Development by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill authorizes a tax credit for employers who hire qualified high school students for summer jobs. The tax credit is equal to 35% of the wages paid to the student employee, but can only be claimed if the employer pays the student at least a total of \$100. An employer can claim up to \$50,000 per year. The program has a cumulative annual cap of \$3 million.

To qualify, a student must be currently enrolled as a junior or senior in high school, meet minimum attendance requirements, earn a grade point average of 2.0 or better, and be eligible for the free or reduced school lunch program. Students who are home schooled and meet these requirements are also eligible. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must establish a procedure by which an employer can determine if he or she is eligible to receive the tax credit based on if the student employee qualifies. The department must also track students for whom employers receive this tax credit.

The provisions of the bill will expire on December 31 six years from the effective date.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of \$159,502 in FY 2008, \$102,818 to \$3,102,818 in FY 2009, and \$105,902 to \$3,105,902 in FY 2010. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2008, FY 2009, and FY 2010.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will help Missouri's economy because it encourages businesses to hire seasonal summer help by providing an incentive to employ high school students. The tax credit will be used to pay the salaries of these employees. These students need work experience, and the money they earn will take some of the financial burden off their families.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Brown (50) and McGhee.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.