

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 1477  
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Defense & Veterans' Affairs  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, most state and local government employees are entitled to differential pay, or salary provided to equalize differing wage rates, when performing active duty training or service with the state or federal military forces. Employees of emergency services districts are eligible for differential pay, but the term is limited to considerably less than a month. This creates a problem for an emergency services district employee who is assigned to active military duty, since the employee must sacrifice needed wages and benefits in order to serve.

C.S.S.B. 1477 seeks to address differential pay and benefits for certain employees of emergency services districts who are members of the armed forces.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 1477 amends the Health and Safety Code to authorize a board of emergency services commissioners to provide differential pay to an emergency services district employee who is a member of the state military forces or a reserve component of the United States armed forces who is called to active duty if the board adopts a policy providing for differential pay for all similarly situated employees and the employee's military pay is less than the employee's gross pay from the district. The bill prohibits the combination of differential pay and military pay from exceeding the employee's actual gross pay from the district. The bill specifies that military pay does not include money the employee receives for service in a combat zone, as hardship pay, or for being separated from the employee's family.

C.S.S.B. 1477 establishes that differential pay begins when the benefits allowed in a leave of absence for certain public employees of the state who are members of the state military forces, a reserve component of the armed forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team are exhausted and continues until the employee's active military duty terminates. The bill authorizes the board to extend the insurance benefits provided by the district to a district employee who is a member of the state military forces or a reserve component of the United States armed forces who is called to active duty and to the employee's dependents. The bill specifies that the extension period begins and ends under the same requirements as differential pay.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2011.

## **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.S.B. 1477 differs from the original by relating to differential pay and benefits for employees of emergency services districts, whereas the original relates to differential pay and benefits for officers and employees of emergency services districts. The substitute differs from the original by making conforming changes.