

SB 489 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 3/16, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Repeals prohibitions on payment of unemployment insurance benefits during school breaks and summer months to certain employees of educational institutions.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Employee wages
- Need for pay during the summer months
- Employee living expenses

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The unemployment insurance (UI) program has special provisions that apply to people who work for educational institutions, generally restricting employees from receiving UI benefits during school breaks, including summer break. Federal law affords little flexibility to states in applying those laws to employees performing instructional, research, or principal administrative work, but provides greater flexibility on their application to people who perform other types of services, such as bus drivers, janitorial workers, and school nurses.

House Bill 2660 (2019) allowed janitorial and maintenance employees of public and nonprofit educational institutions to receive unemployment insurance, if standard eligibility requirements are met, during school breaks, vacations, and holidays in situations where the employee has a reasonable assurance of returning to work after the break.

Senate Bill 489 extends those benefits to all educational workers who are not performing instructional, research, or principal administrative work.