

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1524  
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Business & Industry  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties have expressed concern regarding the vulnerability of Texas workers with limited English proficiency to violations of certain labor and employment laws. The parties assert that such workers are less likely to know their rights as employees compared to workers proficient in English and note that violations of such laws are more frequent in employment sectors with disproportionately high shares of workers with limited English proficiency. Moreover, when these workers do seek help to enforce their employment rights, they may find their access blocked by their inability to navigate systems in English. Workers may seek out assistance from community-based organizations, but many of these organizations have inadequate resources and staffing to fully assist workers. Additionally, some organizations have expressed frustration concerning the process of assisting workers to access services. C.S.H.B. 1524 seeks to ensure that Texas workers with limited English proficiency understand important notices they receive and are able to access and comprehend claims processes available to all workers in Texas.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **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.H.B. 1524 amends the Labor Code to require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to make available any notice the TWC is required to provide to an employee under statutory provisions relating to the payment of wages in the two languages that are most commonly spoken in Texas and to ensure that employees are notified of an employee's ability to request from the TWC such notice or a wage claim form in either of those two languages.

C.S.H.B. 1524 requires the division of workers' compensation of the Texas Department of Insurance to make available to an injured employee any notice the division is required to provide to an injured employee under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act in the two languages that are most commonly spoken in Texas, except an agreement, award, report, or decision under Texas Workers' Compensation Act provisions relating to adjudication of disputes; a commissioner of workers' compensation order under the act; a matter involving an administrative violation proceeding under applicable provisions of the act; or a proceeding or activity under the Administrative Procedure Act.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.

**COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 1524 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

**INTRODUCED**

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 61, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 61.006 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.006. NOTICE LANGUAGES. The commission shall provide any notice the commission is required to provide under this chapter in the two languages that are most commonly spoken in this state.

SECTION 2. Chapter 201, Labor Code, is amended by adding Subchapter I to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER I. NOTICE LANGUAGES  
Sec. 201.111. NOTICE LANGUAGES. The commission shall provide any notice the commission is required to provide under this subtitle in the two languages that are most commonly spoken in this state.

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 3. Subchapter C, Chapter 401, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 401.026 to read as follows:

Sec. 401.026. NOTICE LANGUAGES. The division shall provide any notice the division is required to provide under this subtitle in the two languages that are most

**HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE**

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 61, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 61.006 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.006. NOTICE LANGUAGES. The commission shall:

(1) make available any notice the commission is required to provide to an employee under this chapter in the two languages that are most commonly spoken in this state; and

(2) ensure that employees are notified of an employee's ability to request from the commission notice in either language described by Subdivision (1).

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 2. Section 61.051, Labor Code, is amended by adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

(e) The commission shall ensure that employees are notified of an employee's ability to request from the commission a wage claim form in either language described by Section 61.006.

SECTION 3. Subchapter C, Chapter 401, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 401.026 to read as follows:

Sec. 401.026. EMPLOYEE NOTICE LANGUAGES. The division shall make available to an injured employee any notice the division is required to provide to an

commonly spoken in this state.

injured employee under this subtitle in the two languages that are most commonly spoken in this state. For the purpose of this section, notice does not include:

(1) an agreement, award, report, or decision under Chapter 410;

(2) a commissioner order under this subtitle, including an order under Chapter 408, 410, or 413;

(3) a matter involving an administrative violation proceeding under Chapter 415; or

(4) a proceeding or activity under Chapter 2001, Government Code.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

SECTION 4. Same as introduced version.