

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

**BILL #:** CS/HB 887 Career Service System  
**SPONSOR(S):** Government Efficiency & Accountability, Coley and others  
**TIED BILLS:** IDEN./SIM. BILLS: SB 2202

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| REFERENCE  | ACTION                  | ANALYST              | STAFF DIRECTOR    |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1) <u>Committee on State Affairs</u>                         | <u>10 Y, 0 N</u>        | <u>Bradley</u>       | <u>Williamson</u> |
| 2) <u>Government Efficiency &amp; Accountability Council</u> | <u>14 Y, 0 N, As CS</u> | <u>Bradley/Dykes</u> | <u>Cooper</u>     |
| 3) <u>Policy &amp; Budget Council</u>                        |                         | <u>Leznoff</u>       | <u>Hansen</u>     |
| 4) _____   | _____                   | _____                | _____             |
| 5) _____   | _____                   | _____                | _____             |

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### SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Florida has a civil service system for public employees not deemed to be executive or managerial. The State Constitution mandates such a system be created by the Legislature and authorizes a system for the collective bargaining of wages, hours and terms of conditions of employment by public employees with their public employer. Current law establishes the Career Service System, which was last amended in 2001.

The bill revises the changes made to the Career Service System by the 2001 Legislature.

The bill requires DMS to develop layoff procedures that require use of objective measures of length of service, comparative merit, demonstrated skills, and employee experience. It requires agencies to make every effort to return a probationary employee to the former position from which promoted. It also provides that suspension or dismissal of a Career Service System employee may be imposed only for cause to a person who has achieved permanent status following completion of a one-year probationary period.

The bill requires that a grievance process be made available to all employees, including those on probationary status. It also revises the timeframes for the filing of a grievance and permits the grieving party to appeal an unsatisfactory result above the level of the agency head, in certain cases.

The bill authorizes the Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) to consider mitigation of a disciplinary action imposed by an agency. It modifies the basis for the action as "just cause" as opposed to "cause," and requires that PERC disciplinary actions not consider any other set of facts in reaching its decision.

The bill increases the rulemaking authority of the Department of Management Services.

According to the Department of Management Services and PERC, the bill will produce the workload equivalent of 81 new positions for the Human Resource offices and for PERC. The department estimates a recurring cost of approximately \$4.8 million.

## FULL ANALYSIS

### I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

#### A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

Provide limited government – The bill expands the current rulemaking authority of the Department of Management Services (DMS) by requiring it to adopt regulations to instruct agencies to utilize objective measures in conducting layoffs of permanent status Career Service System employees.

Safeguard individual liberty – The bill imposes a requirement on DMS to adopt rules governing layoffs, which require retention of an agency’s employees by “consideration of objective measures.” Further, the bill allows an employee to pursue a review by DMS of a grievance he or she has filed regarding the Personnel Rules and Regulations if the employee is unhappy with an agency head’s decision.

#### B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

##### **Background**

Florida has a civil service system for public employees not deemed to be executive or managerial. The State Constitution mandates such a system be created by the Legislature<sup>1</sup> and authorizes a system for the collective bargaining of wages, hours, and terms of conditions of employment by public employees with their public employer.<sup>2</sup>

##### **Career Service System**

Part II of chapter 110, F.S., establishes the Career Service System. It requires the Department of Management Services (DMS) to:

- Develop and maintain a uniform classification and equitable pay plan applicable to all positions in the Career Service System;
- Determine guidelines for employee recruitment and selection to be used by employing agencies;
- Adopt rules and procedures for the suspension, reduction in pay, transfer, layoff, demotion, and dismissal of employees; and
- Develop uniform rules, in consultation with affected agencies and pursuant to the approval of the Administration Commission, regarding employee appointment, promotion, demotion, reassignment, separation, status, attendance, and leave.<sup>3</sup>

DMS, however, is prohibited from adopting layoff<sup>4</sup> rules, which include a “bumping” system, except with regard to law enforcement or correctional officers, firefighters, or professional health care providers. “Bumping” is defined to mean “any system whereby a career service employee with greater seniority has the option of selecting a different position not being eliminated, but either vacant or already occupied by an employee of less seniority, and taking that position.”<sup>5</sup> DMS must develop rules that mandate agencies to consider “comparative merit, demonstrated, skills, and the employee’s experience.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Section 14, Art. III of the State Constitution.

<sup>2</sup> Section 6, Art. I of the State Constitution.

<sup>3</sup> See s. 110.201, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> Section 110.107(23), F.S., defines “layoff” to mean “termination of employment due to a shortage of funds or work, or a material change in the duties or organization of an agency, including the outsourcing or privatization of an activity or function previously performed by career service employees.”

<sup>5</sup> Section 110.227(2), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

Current law does not define the terms “career service” and “career service employee.” A “career service employee” may be a short-term or long-term employee. The rules distinguish among probationary, overlap, temporary, trainee, and permanent status. The rules further provide that an employee who has been appointed in accordance with chapter 110, F.S., and granted probationary status will attain permanent status in a class upon successful completion of the designated probationary period for the class.

Current law provides that an employee classified as a “permanent career service employee” only may be suspended or dismissed for cause.<sup>7</sup> Cause includes negligence, inefficiency or inability to perform assigned duties, insubordination, willful violation of the provisions of law or agency rules, conduct unbecoming a public employee, misconduct, habitual drug abuse, or conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude.<sup>8</sup>

The Career Service System was last amended in 2001.

### Senior Management Service System

Part III of chapter 110, F.S., establishes the Senior Management Service System (SMS), which is a separate system of personnel administration for positions in the executive branch. The duties and responsibilities are primarily and essentially policymaking or managerial in nature.<sup>9</sup> DMS is charged with adopting rules that provide for a system for employing, promoting, or reassigning managers that is responsive to organizational or program needs.<sup>10</sup>

### Selected Exempt Service System

Part V of chapter 110, F.S., creates the Selected Exempt Service System (SES). The SES is a separate system of personnel administration that includes those positions that are exempt from the Career Service System. DMS is required to designate all positions included in the SES as managerial/policymaking, professional, or nonmanagerial/nonpolicymaking.<sup>11</sup> Employees in SES serve at the pleasure of the agency head and are subject to suspension, dismissal, reduction in pay, demotion, transfer, or other personnel action at the discretion of the agency head.<sup>12</sup>

### The Public Employees Relations Commission

The Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) was established in 1974. PERC currently is composed of a chair and two full-time commissioners appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.<sup>13</sup> PERC is housed within DMS for administrative purposes, but is not subject to its control, supervision, or direction.<sup>14</sup>

PERC decides cases sitting as a quasi-judicial collegial body and issues final orders. Any appeal of a PERC final order is taken to the District Court of Appeal. In addition to hearing cases, PERC is required to:

- Determine questions and controversies concerning claims for recognition as the bargaining agent for a bargaining unit;
- Determine or approve units appropriate for purposes of collective bargaining;
- Conduct secret ballot elections to determine whether public employees desire to be represented by a union; and

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<sup>7</sup> Section 110.227(1), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Section 110.402, F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Section 110.403, F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 110.602, F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Section 110.604, F.S.

<sup>13</sup> Section 447.205, F.S.

<sup>14</sup> Section 447.205(3), F.S.

- Process charges of unfair labor practices as well as charges relating to a public employee or employee organization.

PERC handles public sector cases (unfair labor practice charges, representation petitions, amendments to certification, petitions to revoke certifications, and labor organizations registration), career service appeals, Drug-Free Workplace appeals, Whistleblower appeals, veterans' preference appeals, attorney's fees appeals, back pay appeals, elections, mediation, and district court appeals.<sup>15</sup>

### **Effect of Bill**

The bill revises the changes made to the Career Service System by the 2001 Legislature.

The bill does not reinstate the practice of "bumping" for Career Service System employees not otherwise classified as law enforcement, firefighters, correctional officer, or professional health care providers. Rather, the bill requires DMS to develop rules regarding layoffs that instruct agencies to employ "objective measures" and to retain employees based on merit, skill, experience, and length of service.

The bill also provides that suspension or dismissal for a Career Service System employee may be imposed only for cause to a person who has achieved permanent status following completion of a one-year probationary period. It applies layoff procedures to all permanent Career Service System employees.

The bill provides that a permanent career service employee who is promoted is subject to the one year probationary period and may be removed from that position without cause, but is entitled to return to his or her former position (or the equivalent level of his or her former position) if such position is available. The bill further requires that if a position is not available, that an agency should make every effort to retain the employee.

The bill provides a grievance process to all employees including those on probationary status. It revises the timeframes for filing a grievance and meeting about a claim from 7 and 5 days to 14 and 7 days, respectively. It also permits the grieving party to appeal an unsatisfactory result above the level of the agency head if the grievance involves an allegation of the agency's failure to comply with the provisions of the Personnel Rules and Regulations.

The bill expands the entitlements and requirements provided to include employees who are subject to a lay off and those who are involuntarily transferred more than 50 miles by highway. It increases the timeframe for an employee to provide a written notice of appeal of an extraordinary action from 14 to 21 calendar days. In addition, it increases the required time period during which PERC must conduct a hearing from 30 days to 60 days following the filing of such notice.

The bill requires PERC to consider mitigation of a disciplinary action imposed by an agency and modifies the basis for the action as "just cause" as opposed to "cause." The bill explicitly authorizes PERC to reduce the penalty imposed by an agency head upon any permanent career service employee. It increases the time period during which an exception to a recommended order may be filed from 5 to 15 days, and requires that PERC, in reviewing disciplinary actions, not consider any other set of facts in reaching its decision.

### **C. SECTION DIRECTORY:**

Section 1 amends s. 110.227, F.S., to revise requirements regarding suspensions, dismissals, reductions in pay, demotions, layoffs, transfers, and grievances.

Section 2 provides an effective date of January 1, 2009.

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<sup>15</sup> See s. 447.207, F.S.

## II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

### A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

See FISCAL COMMENTS section.

### B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

### C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

### D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The Department has indicated that the passage of this bill would increase the workload of state agencies and of PERC. The Department represents that the increase in workload would be due to the additional actions covered by the expanded workforce and the lifting of the level two cap on appeals. The Department conducted an informal survey of state agencies. Those results indicated the bill would produce the workload equivalent of 78 new positions for the Human Resource offices and 3 new positions for PERC to manage what it believes to be an additional workload. The Department estimated the recurring cost to be approximately \$4.8 million and the non-recurring cost to be approximately \$355,428.<sup>16</sup>

*NOTE: The sponsor has indicated she intends to file an amendment at the next Council stop in order to eliminate the fiscal impact created by the bill.*

## III. COMMENTS

### A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

This bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds. This bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities. This bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities have to raise revenue.

2. Other:

None.

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<sup>16</sup> Department of Management Services Bill Analysis for HB 887, March 28, 2008, at 4 (on file with the Committee on State Affairs); see also, analysis for CS/SB 2202 by the Public Employees Relations Commission, April 9, 2008, at 2 and 3 (on file with the Committee on State Affairs).

**B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:**

Current law requires DMS to develop rules that instruct agencies to consider comparative merit, demonstrated skills, and the employee's experience during the implementation of layoffs. The bill requires DMS to promulgate rules for the implementation of layoffs that will require agencies to retain employees based on "consideration of objective measures" of the aforementioned factors and adds "length of service" as a factor that must be considered. Under both current statute and the bill, the Administration Commission must approve the rules considered by DMS before they may be fully adopted by the department.

**C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:**

Lines 132-133 and 146-147 provide rights and requirements to employees who are subject to an "involuntary transfer of more than 50 miles by highway." However, the phrase is unclear because it does not state from where the "50 miles by highway" should be measured.

**D. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR**

No statement submitted.

**IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES**

Committee on State Affairs

On April 2, 2008, the Committee on State Affairs adopted a strike-all amendment and reported the bill favorable with amendment.

The bill authorized DMS to reinstate bumping for all Career Service System employees not otherwise classified as law enforcement, firefighters, or correctional officers, or professional health care providers. The strike-all amendment removes the language, which reinstates bumping for those not already provided for by current law.

The bill requires DMS to develop rules regarding layoffs that employ "objective measures" and require agencies to retain their "best employees," based on "comparative merit, demonstrated skills, and the employee's experience." The strike-all amendment removes the references to "best" employees and requires "length of service" to also be considered among the objective measures.

The bill provides that a permanent career service employee who is promoted is subject to the one year probationary period and may be removed from that position without cause, but is entitled to return to his or her former position (or the equivalent level of his or her former position) if such action is taken. The strike-all amendment adds to the provision that such action must be taken if the former position or an equivalent position is available. The amendment further requires that if a position is not available an agency should make every effort to retain the employee.

The strike-all amendment changes the effective date from July 1, 2008 to January 1, 2009.

Government Efficiency & Accountability Council

On April 8, 2008, the Government Efficiency & Accountability Council reported HB 887 favorably as a Council Substitute to incorporate the amendment adopted by the Committee on State Affairs and two amendments adopted by the Council. The first amendment adopted by the Council states every effort made by an agency to retain an employee must be made in compliance with current law, clarifying that an agency may not engage in the practice of "bumping" in making every effort to retain an employee. The second amendment addresses a drafting error by clarifying that the Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) "must consider the mitigation of the discipline for any appropriate cause or affirm the decision of the agency head."