MONTANA
EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK
TASK FORCE

STATE ADMINISTRATION
Exhibit No. 4
Date 2-4-15
Bill No. SB198

SB 198

REVISE LONGEVITY LAWS FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

SPONSOR SEN. MARY CAFERRO SD 41

STATUS QUO

MCA 2-18-304 currently requires that employees of the State of Montana complete 5 uninterrupted years of service before receiving a 1.5% longevity allowance on their salary. Employees who leave state government, such as those who take time off to care for young children, experience a "resetting of the clock" on their longevity calculation due to this "break in service." When employees return to state employment, their previous five years of service are no longer counted toward longevity, and they must start again at zero.

The current break in service only applies to longevity allowances. It dos not apply to how vacation days are earned or how years of service are calculated for retirement.

SOLUTION

SB 198 amends MCA 2-18-304 to remove the requirement for service to be uninterrupted and contiguous for the purposes of the calculation of the longevity allowance. This bill applies the change moving forward, so there will not be any immediate cost impact.

SB 198 is a small step to address the effects of balancing family responsibilities and work responsibilities and to end the practice of penalizing workers for taking time away from the workforce to care for children or aging parents. While small, this bill will make a huge difference for employees of the State of Montana.