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HOUSE BILL NO. 2091

Offered January 10, 2007

Prefiled January 8, 2007

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 51.1-1133 and 51.1-1400 of the Code of Virginia, relating to health insurance credits for state employees receiving long-term disability benefits.

Patrons—Tata, Nutter and Shuler

Referred to Committee on Appropriations

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That §§ 51.1-1133 and 51.1-1400 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 51.1-1133. Life and accident insurance coverage during disability absences.

A. Participating full-time employees participating in a group life and accident insurance program established pursuant to Chapter 5 (§ 51.1-500 et seq.) of this title shall continue to participate in such program during periods of absence covered by short-term and long-term disability benefits.

B. During periods of absence covered by short-term disability benefits, the amount of the life insurance benefit shall be based on the annual salary of the participating full-time employee at the commencement of the disability and shall be adjusted to include salary increases awarded during the period covered by short-term disability benefits.

C. During periods of absence covered by long-term disability benefits, the amount of the life insurance benefit shall be based on the annual salary of the participating employee at the commencement of the disability. Such amount shall (i) not include salary increases awarded during the period covered by long-term disability benefits and (ii) be increased annually by an amount recommended by the program actuary and approved by the Board.

~~D. An employee receiving long-term disability benefits shall receive the maximum health insurance premium credit as provided for in § 51.1-1400.~~

§ 51.1-1400. Health insurance credits for retired state employees.

A. The Commonwealth shall provide a credit toward the cost of health insurance coverage for any former state employee, as defined in § 2.2-2818, who retired under the Virginia Retirement System, State Police Officers' Retirement System, Judicial Retirement System, Virginia Law Officers' Retirement System, or any retirement system authorized pursuant to §§ 51.1-126, 51.1-126.1, 51.1-126.3, 51.1-126.4, 51.1-126.5, and or 51.1-126.7 and who (i) rendered at least 15 years of total creditable service under the Retirement System or (ii) rendered service as a temporary employee of the General Assembly in 1972 and became a member of the retirement system from 1972 to 1985 immediately following such temporary service. The amount of each monthly health insurance credit payable under this section shall be \$4 per year of creditable service, which amount shall be credited monthly to any retired state employee participating in the state retiree health benefits program pursuant to § 51.1-1405 or an alternative personal health insurance plan as provided herein. However, such credit shall not exceed the health insurance premium for retiree-only coverage as provided under such alternative personal health insurance plan. Any (i) employee participant pursuant to § 51.1-126, 51.1-126.1, 51.1-126.3, 51.1-126.4, 51.1-126.5, or 51.1-126.7 ~~receiving long-term disability~~, or (ii) retired state employee retired under the provisions of § 51.1-156 or 51.1-307, or (iii) ~~any participating employee receiving long-term disability pursuant to § 51.1-1112 or 51.1-1123~~ shall receive a maximum monthly credit which is the greater of (i) \$120, (ii) \$4 per year for each year of creditable service at the time of disability retirement, or (iii) \$4 per year for each year of creditable service at the time of eligibility for long-term disability. Any person included in the membership of a retirement system provided by Chapter 1 (§ 51.1-124.1 et seq.), 2 (§ 51.1-200 et seq.), 2.1 (§ 51.1-211 et seq.), or 3 (§ 51.1-300 et seq.) of this title who elects to defer his retirement pursuant to subsection C of § 51.1-153, subsection C of § 51.1-205 or subsection C of § 51.1-305 shall be entitled to receive the allowable credit provided by this section on the effective date of his retirement.

B. For those retired state employees:

1. Participating in the state retiree health benefits program, such credit shall be applied to the monthly premium deducted from benefits payable to retired state employees in accordance with Chapters 1 (§ 51.1-124.1 et seq.), 2 (§ 51.1-200 et seq.), 2.1 (§ 51.1-211 et seq.), and 3 (§ 51.1-300 et seq.) of this title. In the event that either no benefit is payable or the benefit payable is insufficient to deduct the entire health care premium, the payment of the credit shall be determined in the manner prescribed by the Virginia Retirement System. Eligibility for the credit shall be determined in a manner prescribed by the Virginia Retirement System.

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59 2. Not electing or eligible to participate in the state retiree health benefits program and who purchase
60 an alternative personal health insurance policy from a carrier or organization of his own choosing, such
61 retirees shall be eligible to receive a credit in the amount specified in subsection A. Eligibility for the
62 credit and payment for the credit shall be determined in a manner prescribed by the Virginia Retirement
63 System.

64 C. Any person included in the membership of a retirement system provided by Chapter 1
65 (§ 51.1-124.1 et seq.), 2 (§ 51.1-200 et seq.), 2.1 (§ 51.1-211 et seq.), or 3 (§ 51.1-300 et seq.) of this
66 title who (i) rendered at least 15 years of total creditable service as a state employee as defined in
67 § 2.2-2818 and (ii) after terminating state service, was employed by a local government that does not
68 elect to provide a health insurance credit under § 51.1-1401 or 51.1-1402, shall be eligible for the credit
69 provided by subsection A, provided that the retired employee is participating in a health insurance plan.
70 The Commonwealth shall be charged with the credit as provided for in subsection D. In such case, the
71 health insurance credit shall be determined based upon the amount of state service or service as a
72 teacher, whichever is greater.

73 D. The Virginia Retirement System shall actuarially determine the amount necessary to fund all
74 credits provided by this section to reflect the cost of such credits in the employer contribution rate
75 pursuant to § 51.1-145, and prescribe such terms and conditions as are necessary to carry out the
76 provisions of this section. The costs associated with the administration of the health insurance credit
77 program provided for in this section shall be recovered from the health insurance credit trust fund.

78 E. Notwithstanding anything contained in this section to the contrary, the Virginia Commonwealth
79 University Health System Authority shall pay the cost of coverage for employees of such Authority who
80 (i) retired under the Virginia Retirement System or any retirement system authorized pursuant to
81 § 23-50.16:24.1, 51.1-126, 51.1-126.1, or former § 51.1-126.2; (ii) were employed by such Authority
82 prior to July 1, 1998, and were not subsequently rehired by such Authority on or after July 1, 1998; and
83 (iii) served no less than 15 years of creditable service as regularly employed full-time employees of such
84 Authority or the Commonwealth.