

FAMILY LAW SECTION

Respectfully submits the following position on:

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HB 5655

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The Family Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan itself, but rather a Section which members of the State Bar choose voluntarily to join, based on common professional interest.

The position expressed is that of the Family Law Section only and is not the position of the State Bar of Michigan.

To date, the State Bar does not have a position on this matter.

The total membership of the Family Law Section is 2,865.

The position was adopted after discussion and vote at a scheduled meeting. The number of members in the decision-making body is 21. The number who voted in favor to this position was 19. The number who voted opposed to this position was 0. The number who abstained from voting was 0.

Report on Public Policy Position

Name of Section:

Family Law Section

Contact person:

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Bill Number:

[HB 5655](#) (Irwin) Employment security; benefits; disqualification from receiving benefits when leaving employment; create exception for domestic violence victim. Amends secs. 17 & 29 of 1936 (Ex Sess) PA 1 (MCL [421.17](#) & [421.29](#)) & adds sec. 29a.

Date position was adopted:

September 18, 2014

Process used to take the ideological position:

Position adopted after discussion and vote at a scheduled meeting.

Number of members in the decision-making body:

21

Number who voted in favor and opposed to the position:

19 Voted for position

0 Voted against position

0 Abstained from vote

2 Did not vote

Position:

Support

Explanation of the position, including any recommended amendments:

HB 5655 provides that an employee is not disqualified from unemployment benefits if they can establish that the reason for leaving work is due to domestic violence. This helps victims of domestic violence escape their abusers. The bill ensures that the employer is not penalized for this coverage by providing that the claims are made to the "nonchargeable benefits account" so that the individual employer is not held responsible for these claims. A study by the National Employment Law Project showed that in the 26 states (plus the District of Columbia) which have enacted this legislation, the costs have been minimal. States with domestic violence unemployment insurance laws include AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, KS, IL, IN, ME, MN, MT, NE, NJ, NY, NC, OK, OR, RI, SD, TX, WA, WI, and WY. Out of all unemployment claims, domestic violence claims were less than .1%. The Family Law Section supports this bill.

The text of any legislation, court rule, or administrative regulation that is the subject of or referenced in this report.

<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2014-HB-5655>