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HOUSE BILL 1237

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007

INTRODUCED BY

Richard D. Vigil

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC WORKS; REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO PAY ALL FRINGE BENEFITS OR MAKE PAYMENTS TO THE PUBLIC WORKS HEALTH CARE COVERAGE FUND; CREATING A FUND; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. Section 13-4-12 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1965, Chapter 35, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

"13-4-12. DEFINITION OF THE TERM "WAGES".--

A. As used in Section 13-4-11 NMSA 1978, "wages", "scale of wages", "wage rates", "minimum wages", [~~and~~] "prevailing wages", "fringe benefits", "scale of fringe benefits", "fringe benefit rates", "minimum fringe benefit rates" and "prevailing fringe benefits" include:

(1) the basic hourly rate of pay for a class or classification of laborer or mechanic performing work under

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1 the Public Works Minimum Wage Act; and

2 (2) the amount of:

3 (a) the rate of contribution irrevocably
4 made by a contractor, subcontractor, employer or any person
5 acting as a contractor to a trustee or a third person pursuant
6 to a financially responsible fund, plan or program for fringe
7 benefits as described in Subparagraph (b) of this paragraph;
8 and

9 (b) the rate of costs to a contractor,
10 subcontractor, employer or a person acting as a contractor that
11 reasonably may be anticipated in providing fringe benefits to
12 laborers and mechanics pursuant to an enforceable commitment to
13 carry out a financially responsible plan or program that was
14 communicated in writing to the laborers and mechanics affected
15 for: 1) medical [~~or hospital care~~] benefit plans; 2) pensions
16 on retirement or death; 3) compensation for injuries or illness
17 resulting from occupational activity; or 4) insurance to
18 provide for any of the foregoing; and for: 5) unemployment
19 benefits; 6) life insurance; 7) disability and sickness
20 insurance; 8) accident insurance; 9) vacation and holiday pay;
21 10) costs of apprenticeship or other similar programs; or for
22 11) other bona fide fringe benefits; but only where the
23 contractor, subcontractor, employer or a person acting as a
24 contractor is not required by other federal, state or local law
25 to provide any of the foregoing or similar benefits.

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1 B. The obligation of a contractor, subcontractor,
2 employer or person acting as a contractor to make payment in
3 accordance with the prevailing wage determinations of the
4 director of the labor and industrial division of the labor
5 department, insofar as Section 13-4-11 NMSA 1978 or other
6 sections of legislative acts incorporating Section 13-4-11 NMSA
7 1978 are concerned, [~~may~~] shall be discharged by the making of
8 payments consistent with Subsection B of Section 50-4-2 NMSA
9 1978, except that the frequency of payments shall comply with
10 Subsection A of Section 13-4-11 NMSA 1978. The payments shall
11 include:

12 (1) payment of the base wage rate as the
13 director of the labor and industrial division of the labor
14 department has determined to be prevailing for the appropriate
15 class of laborers or mechanics; and

16 (2) the making of contributions of a type
17 referred to in Subparagraph (a) of Paragraph (2) of Subsection
18 A of this section; or

19 (3) the assumption of an enforceable
20 commitment to bear the costs of a plan or program of a type
21 referred to in Subparagraph (b) of Paragraph (2) of Subsection
22 A of this section; or

23 (4) any combination of Paragraphs (2) and (3)
24 of this subsection where the aggregate of any payments or
25 contributions and costs therefor is not less than the rate of

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1 pay described in Section 13-4-11 NMSA 1978 plus the amount
2 referred to in this section; and

3 (5) fringe benefit contributions for medical
4 benefit plans required under the Public Works Minimum Wage Act
5 shall not be made in cash or other form except as provided by
6 this section.

7 C. As an alternative to making required medical
8 benefit plan fringe benefit contributions to a private bona
9 fide financially responsible fund, plan or program, a
10 contractor, subcontractor, employer or person acting as a
11 contractor may submit payments for a medical benefit plan
12 fringe benefit contribution required by this section to the
13 director of the labor and industrial division of the labor
14 department in appropriate amounts as required by the applicable
15 prevailing wage determination. Such payments shall be accepted
16 as required medical benefit plan fringe benefit contributions
17 and shall be forwarded by the director to the public works
18 health care coverage fund.

19 D. The director shall develop appropriate criteria
20 and guidelines for determining whether a plan, fund or program
21 is bona fide for the purposes of this section.

22 [~~C.~~] E. The provisions of this section shall not
23 affect existing contracts or contracts resulting from bids
24 outstanding on July 15, 1965."

25 Section 2. Section 13-4-13 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1965,

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1 Chapter 35, Section 3, as amended) is amended to read:

2 "13-4-13. FAILURE TO PAY MINIMUM WAGE OR FRINGE
3 BENEFITS--TERMINATION OF CONTRACT.--Every contract within the
4 scope of the Public Works Minimum Wage Act shall contain
5 further provision that in the event it is found by the director
6 of the labor and industrial division of the labor department
7 that any laborer or mechanic employed on the site of the
8 project has been or is being paid as a result of a [~~willful~~]
9 violation a rate of wages or fringe benefits less than the rate
10 of wages or fringe benefits required, the contracting agency
11 may, by written notice to the contractor, subcontractor,
12 employer or person acting as a contractor, terminate [~~their~~]
13 the right to proceed with the work or such part of the work as
14 to which there has been a [~~willful~~] failure to pay the required
15 [~~wages~~] wage rates or fringe benefits, and the contracting
16 agency may prosecute the work to completion by contract or
17 otherwise, and the contractor or person acting as a contractor
18 and [~~his~~] the contractor's or person's sureties shall be liable
19 to the state for any excess costs occasioned thereby. Any
20 party receiving notice of termination of [~~his~~] a project or
21 subcontract under the provisions of this section may appeal the
22 finding of the director as provided in the Public Works Minimum
23 Wage Act."

24 Section 3. Section 13-4-14 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1965,
25 Chapter 35, Section 4, as amended) is amended to read:

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1 "13-4-14. PAYMENT OF WAGES AND FRINGE BENEFITS FROM FUNDS
2 WITHHELD--LIST OF CONTRACTORS VIOLATING ACT--ADDITIONAL RIGHT
3 OF WAGE EARNERS.--

4 A. The director of the labor and industrial
5 division of the labor department shall certify to the
6 contracting agency the names of persons or firms the director
7 has found to have disregarded their obligations to employees
8 under the Public Works Minimum Wage Act and the amount of
9 arrears. The contracting agency shall pay or cause to be paid
10 to the affected laborers and mechanics, from any accrued
11 payments withheld under the terms of the contract or designated
12 for the project, any wages found due such workers pursuant to
13 the Public Works Minimum Wage Act. The director shall, after
14 notice to the affected persons, distribute a list to all
15 departments of the state giving the names of persons or firms
16 the director has found to have [~~willfully~~] violated the Public
17 Works Minimum Wage Act. No contract or project shall be
18 awarded to the persons or firms appearing on this list or to
19 any firm, corporation, partnership or association in which the
20 persons or firms have an interest until three years have
21 elapsed from the date of publication of the list containing the
22 names of the persons or firms. A person to be included on the
23 list to be distributed may appeal the finding of the director
24 as provided in the Public Works Minimum Wage Act.

25 B. If the accrued payments withheld under the terms

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1 of the contract, as mentioned in Subsection A of this section,
2 are insufficient to reimburse all the laborers and mechanics
3 with respect to whom there has been a failure to pay the wages
4 required pursuant to the Public Works Minimum Wage Act, the
5 laborers and mechanics shall have the right of action or
6 intervention or both against the contractor or person acting as
7 a contractor and ~~his~~ the contractor's or person's sureties,
8 conferred by law upon such persons furnishing labor and
9 materials, and, in such proceeding, it shall be no defense that
10 the laborers and mechanics accepted or agreed to less than the
11 required rate of wages, fringe benefits or voluntarily made
12 refunds. The director of the labor and industrial division of
13 the labor department shall refer such matters to the district
14 attorney in the appropriate county, and it is the duty and
15 responsibility of the district attorney to bring civil suit for
16 wages or fringe benefits due and liquidated damages provided
17 for in Subsection C of this section.

18 C. In the event of any violation of the Public
19 Works Minimum Wage Act or implementing rules, the contractor,
20 subcontractor, employer or a person acting as a contractor
21 responsible for the violation shall be liable to any affected
22 employee for the employee's unpaid wages. In addition, the
23 contractor, subcontractor, employer or a person acting as a
24 contractor shall be liable to any affected employee for
25 liquidated damages beginning with the first day of covered

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1 employment in the sum of one hundred dollars [~~(\$100.00)~~] (\$100)
2 for each calendar day on which a contractor, subcontractor,
3 employer or person acting as a contractor has [~~willfully~~]
4 required or permitted an individual laborer or mechanic to work
5 in violation of the provisions of the Public Works Minimum Wage
6 Act.

7 D. In an action brought pursuant to Subsection C of
8 this section, the court may award, in addition to all other
9 remedies, attorney fees and costs to an employee adversely
10 affected by a violation of the Public Works Minimum Wage Act by
11 a contractor, subcontractor, [~~employee~~] employer or a person
12 acting as a contractor."

13 Section 4. [NEW MATERIAL] PUBLIC WORKS HEALTH CARE
14 COVERAGE FUND ESTABLISHED.--The "public works health care
15 coverage fund" is created in the state treasury. The fund
16 consists of money received by the human services department
17 through legislative appropriations to the fund, gifts, grants,
18 donations and bequests. Money in the fund shall not revert to
19 any other fund at the end of a fiscal year. The fund shall be
20 administered by the human services department, and money in the
21 fund is appropriated to the human services department to
22 provide health insurance to residents of the state. Money in
23 the fund shall be disbursed on warrants signed by the secretary
24 of finance and administration pursuant to vouchers signed by
25 the secretary of human services or the secretary's authorized

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1 representative.

2 Section 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the
3 provisions of this act is July 1, 2007.

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