

HB 1533 -- ECONOMIC EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP ACT

SPONSOR: Butler

This bill establishes the "Economic Education Partnership Act." If an employer with facilities in Missouri with 50 or fewer employees pays for the tuition or fees for an employee or an intern who is also a Missouri resident to pursue an associates, bachelors, masters, or doctorate degree in health care, engineering, or information technology related programs, the employer can retain withholding taxes on those employees for up to five years. An employer may also retain withholding taxes on its employees if the employer trains an individual for a job in the health care, engineering, or information technology field for no more than one year. The amount of withholding taxes that the employer may retain in either circumstance is limited to the amount the employer spent on education benefits or training wages, but the total amount of withholding tax that can be retained by all employers under this bill shall not exceed \$2 million.

Additionally, an employer seeking the benefits of the Act shall enter into an agreement with the Department of Economic Development requiring the employer to employ the individual upon the completion of his or her degree or training for at least as long as the employer is authorized to retain withholding taxes. The department can audit employers to ensure compliance with the program requirements. An employer who fails to comply with the agreement must cease retaining any withholding tax and repay any amounts of withholding tax retained plus interest at 5% per year.

The provisions of the bill will expire seven years after its effective date.

This bill is the same as HB 1460 (2016).