SLS 051ES-199

ENGROSSED

First Extraordinary Session, 2005

SENATE BILL NO. 30

BY SENATOR HEITMEIER AND REPRESENTATIVE ALARIO

GROUP BENEFITS PROGRAM. Provides for certain benefits offered through the Office of Group Benefits programs for employees who were furloughed or terminated as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. (gov sig)

1	AN ACT
2	To amend and reenact the introductory paragraph of R.S. $42:851(E)(1)$ and $(M)(1)$ and to
3	enact R.S. 42:851(D)(4) and (M)(4), relative to Office of Group Benefits programs;
4	to prohibit any reduction in the minimum state contribution for premium payments
5	for certain employees affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita under certain
6	circumstances; and to provide for related matters.
7	Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:
8	Section 1. R.S. 42:851(D)(4) and (M)(4) are hereby enacted and the introductory
9	paragraph of R.S. $42:851(E)(1)$ and $(M)(1)$ are hereby amended and reenacted to read as
10	follows:
11	§851. Authority for employee benefit programs; payroll deduction for payment of
12	premiums
13	* * *
14	D.
15	* * *
16	(4) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, any lapse in
17	participation for employees furloughed or terminated as the result of hurricanes

Page 1 of 3 Coding: Words which are struck through are deletions from existing law; words in **boldface type and underscored** are additions.

1	Katrina and Rita and subsequently rehired between August 30, 2005 and
2	December 31, 2006 shall not reduce the state minimum contribution.
3	E.(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Part to the contrary, for
4	any person who is an active employee as defined by R.S. 42:808 and who does not
5	participate in the Office of Group Benefits program provided by this Part before
6	January 1, 2002, but subsequently enrolls in the program, or for any person who is
7	hired on or after January 1, 2002, who meets the definition of employee as provided
8	by Subsection F of this Section R.S. 42:808 the state contribution of the total
9	premium shall, upon retirement, be:
10	* * *
11	M.(1) Notwithstanding any provision of law or any rule or regulation to the
12	contrary, the state of Louisiana shall continue to contribute its portion of the
13	premium or charges due under this Section for which an employee is granted leave
14	of absence without pay due to a service-related injury or at the request of the agency
15	for a period not to exceed twelve months.
16	* * *
17	(4) An employee who is granted leave of absence without pay for any
18	reason other than those enumerated above may continue participation in the
19	Office of Group Benefits program for a period not to exceed twelve months
20	upon the employee's payment of the full premium or charges due.
21	* * *
22	Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
23	signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
24	by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
25	vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
26	effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Carla S. Roberts.

DIGEST

Heitmeier (SB 30)

Present law provides for the minimum contribution toward premiums payable by retirees.

<u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and prohibits any reduction in the state minimum contribution as a result of any lapse in participation from August 30, 2005, through December 31, 2006, for an employee furloughed or terminated as the result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita who is subsequently rehired.

<u>Present law</u> provides that where an employee is granted a leave of absence for a service related injury or at the request of the agency, or is disabled under the worker's compensation, he may continue participation in Office of Group Benefits program for a period not to exceed 12 months. The state will continue to contribute its portion of the premiums.

<u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> but provides that an employee who is granted leave of absence for any other reason may continue participation in the Office of Group Benefits program for a period not to exceed 12 months if the employee pays the full premium or charges due.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends 42:851(E)(1), (M)(1); adds R.S. 42:851(D)(4) and (M)(4))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

- Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Insurance to the original <u>bill.</u>
- 1. Allows an employee who is granted leave of absence without pay due to reasons other than work related injury to continue to participate in the Office of Group Benefits program for up to 12 months upon the employee's payment of the full premium or charges due.