

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-second General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

PREAMENDED

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 20-1307.01 Yelana Love x2295

HOUSE BILL 20-1415

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

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Finance Appropriations

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING A WORKER'S RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE FOR CONDUCT
102 RELATED TO A PRINCIPAL'S ACTIONS DURING A PUBLIC HEALTH
103 EMERGENCY, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN
104 APPROPRIATION.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill prohibits a principal, which includes an employer, certain labor contractors, public employers, and entities that rely on independent contractors for a specified percentage of their workforce, from

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

HOUSE
3rd Reading Unamended
June 9, 2020

HOUSE
Amended 2nd Reading
June 8, 2020

discriminating, retaliating, or taking adverse action against any worker who:

- ! Raises any concern about workplace health and safety practices or hazards related to a public health emergency to the principal, the principal's agent, other workers, a government agency, or the public if the workplace health and safety practices fail to meet guidelines established by a federal, state, or local public health agency with jurisdiction over the workplace; or
- ! Voluntarily wears at the worker's workplace the worker's own personal protective equipment, such as a mask, faceguard, or gloves.

A person may seek relief for a violation of the bill by:

- ! Filing a complaint with the division of labor standards and statistics in the department of labor and employment;
- ! Bringing an action in district court, after exhausting administrative remedies; or
- ! Bringing a whistleblower action in the name of the state in district court, after exhausting administrative remedies.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** article 14.4 to title 8 as follows:

ARTICLE 14.4

Worker Rights Related to a Public Health Emergency

8-14.4-101. Definitions. AS USED IN THIS ARTICLE 14.4, UNLESS
THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

8 (1) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND
9 EMPLOYMENT.

10 (2) "DIVISION" MEANS THE DIVISION OF LABOR STANDARDS AND
11 STATISTICS IN THE DEPARTMENT.

12 (3) "PRINCIPAL" MEANS:

13 (a) AN "EMPLOYER" AS SET FORTH IN THE FEDERAL "FAIR LABOR
14 STANDARDS ACT OF 1938", 29 U.S.C. SEC. 203 (d):

3 (c) THE STATE OF COLORADO, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, AND
4 POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE AS DEFINED IN SECTION 1-7.5-103
5 (6); AND

6 (d) AN ENTITY THAT CONTRACTS WITH FIVE OR MORE
7 INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS IN THE STATE EACH YEAR.

8 (4) "PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY" MEANS:

11 (b) A DISASTER EMERGENCY DECLARED BY THE GOVERNOR BASED
12 ON A PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN.

13 (5) "WORKER" MEANS:

14 (a) AN EMPLOYEE AS DEFINED IN SECTION 8-4-101 (5); OR

15 (b) A PERSON WHO WORKS FOR AN ENTITY THAT CONTRACTS WITH
16 FIVE OR MORE INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS IN THE STATE EACH YEAR.

17 **8-14.4-102. Prohibition against discrimination based on claims**
18 **related to a public health emergency.** (1) A PRINCIPAL SHALL NOT
19 DISCRIMINATE, TAKE ADVERSE ACTION, OR RETALIATE AGAINST ANY
20 WORKER BASED ON THE WORKER, IN GOOD FAITH, RAISING ANY
21 REASONABLE CONCERN ABOUT WORKPLACE VIOLATIONS OF GOVERNMENT
22 HEALTH OR SAFETY RULES, OR ABOUT AN OTHERWISE SIGNIFICANT
23 WORKPLACE THREAT TO HEALTH OR SAFETY, RELATED TO A PUBLIC
24 HEALTH EMERGENCY TO THE PRINCIPAL, THE PRINCIPAL'S AGENT, OTHER
25 WORKERS, A GOVERNMENT AGENCY, OR THE PUBLIC IF THE PRINCIPAL
26 CONTROLS THE WORKPLACE CONDITIONS GIVING RISE TO THE THREAT OR
27 VIOLATION.

7 (b) A CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT THAT VIOLATES SUBSECTION
8 (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION IS VOID AND UNENFORCEABLE AS CONTRARY TO
9 THE PUBLIC POLICY OF THIS STATE. A PRINCIPAL'S ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE
10 SUCH A CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT IS AN ADVERSE ACTION IN VIOLATION
11 OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4.

17 (a) PROVIDES A HIGHER LEVEL OF PROTECTION THAN THE
18 EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE PRINCIPAL;

19 (b) IS RECOMMENDED BY A FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL PUBLIC
20 HEALTH AGENCY WITH JURISDICTION OVER THE WORKER'S WORKPLACE;
21 AND

22 (c) DOES NOT RENDER THE WORKER INCAPABLE OF PERFORMING
23 THE WORKER'S JOB OR PREVENT A WORKER FROM FULFILLING THE DUTIES
24 OF THE WORKER'S POSITION.

25 (4) A PRINCIPAL SHALL NOT DISCRIMINATE, TAKE ADVERSE
26 ACTION, OR RETALIATE AGAINST A WORKER BASED ON THE WORKER
27 OPPOSING ANY PRACTICE THE WORKER REASONABLY BELIEVES IS

1 UNLAWFUL UNDER THIS ARTICLE 14.4 OR FOR MAKING A CHARGE,
2 TESTIFYING, ASSISTING, OR PARTICIPATING IN ANY MANNER IN AN
3 INVESTIGATION, PROCEEDING, OR HEARING AS TO ANY MATTER THE
4 WORKER REASONABLY BELIEVES TO BE UNLAWFUL UNDER THIS ARTICLE
5 14.4.

6 (5)  THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A WORKER WHO
7 DISCLOSES INFORMATION:
8 (a) THAT THE WORKER KNOWS TO BE FALSE; OR
9 (b) WITH RECKLESS DISREGARD FOR THE TRUTH OR FALSITY OF THE
10 INFORMATION.

11 
12 (6) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION AUTHORIZES A WORKER TO SHARE
13 INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INFORMATION THAT IS OTHERWISE PROHIBITED FROM
14 DISCLOSURE UNDER STATE OR FEDERAL LAW.

15 **8-14.4-103. Principal post notice of rights - rules.** (1) A
16 PRINCIPAL SHALL POST NOTICE OF A WORKER'S RIGHTS UNDER THIS
17 ARTICLE 14.4 IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION ON THE PRINCIPAL'S PREMISES.

18 (2) THE DIVISION SHALL PROMULGATE RULES TO ESTABLISH THE
19 FORM OF THE NOTICE REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION.

20 **8-14.4-104. Relief for aggrieved person.** (1) A PERSON MAY
21 SEEK RELIEF FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4 BY:

22 (a) FILING A COMPLAINT WITH THE DIVISION PURSUANT TO SECTION
23 8-14.4-105; OR

24 (b) BRINGING AN ACTION IN DISTRICT COURT PURSUANT TO
25 SECTION 8-14.4-106.

26 
27 (2) A PERSON SHALL EXHAUST ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

1 PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-105 PRIOR TO BRINGING AN ACTION IN
2 COURT.

3 **8-14.4-105. Enforcement by the division - rules.** (1) (a) **WITHIN**
4 **TWO YEARS AFTER AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4, AN**
5 **AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL OR WHISTLEBLOWER MAY FILE A COMPLAINT**
6 **AGAINST A PRINCIPAL WITH THE DIVISION AS SPECIFIED IN THIS**
7 **SUBSECTION (1).**

8 (b) UNTIL THE DATE THE DIVISION MAKES A COMPLAINT FORM
9 PUBLICLY AVAILABLE:

10 (I) **AN AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL OR WHISTLEBLOWER MAY FILE A**
11 **COMPLAINT OF A VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4 WITH THE DIVISION IN**
12 **ANY FORM, BY MAIL OR ELECTRONIC MAIL;**

13 (II) **THE DIVISION MAY LATER REQUIRE THE AGGRIEVED**
14 **INDIVIDUAL OR WHISTLEBLOWER TO COMPLETE THE DIVISION'S COMPLAINT**
15 **FORM; AND**

16 (III) **THE FILING DATE IS THE DATE OF THE CLAIMANT'S ORIGINAL**
17 **FILING, EVEN IF THE DIVISION LATER REQUESTS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
18 **OR COMPLETION OF THE DIVISION'S COMPLAINT FORM.**

19 (c) AFTER THE DIVISION MAKES A COMPLAINT FORM PUBLICLY
20 AVAILABLE, **AN AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL OR WHISTLEBLOWER MAY FILE A**
21 **COMPLAINT ONLY BY COMPLETING THE REQUIRED FORM.**

22 (2) **THE DIVISION SHALL EITHER:**

23 (a) **INVESTIGATE ALLEGED PRINCIPAL VIOLATIONS OF, OR**
24 **INTERFERENCE WITH RIGHTS OR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER, THIS ARTICLE**
25 **14.4 AND COMPLAINTS FILED WITH THE DIVISION BY AGGRIEVED**
26 **INDIVIDUALS AND WHISTLEBLOWERS; OR**

27 (b) **AUTHORIZE AN AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL OR WHISTLEBLOWER**

1 TO PROCEED WITH AN ACTION IN DISTRICT COURT AS PROVIDED IN
2 SECTIONS 8-14.4-106 AND 8-14.4-107. A PERSON WHO RECEIVES
3 AUTHORIZATION PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (2)(b) IS CONSIDERED TO
4 HAVE EXHAUSTED ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES.

5 (3) IN AN INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED PRINCIPAL RETALIATION OR
6 INTERFERENCE WITH WORKER RIGHTS, IF AN INVESTIGATION YIELDS A
7 DETERMINATION THAT:

8 (a) A VIOLATION HAS OCCURRED, THE DIVISION MAY AWARD
9 REASONABLE ATTORNEY FEES AND IMPOSE FINES PURSUANT TO SECTION
10 8-1-140 (2);

11 (b) RIGHTS OF MULTIPLE WORKERS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED, THE
12 VIOLATION AS TO EACH WORKER IS A SEPARATE VIOLATION FOR PURPOSES
13 OF FINES, PENALTIES, OR OTHER REMEDIES; AND

14 (c) A WORKER WAS FIRED, VOLUNTARILY LEFT EMPLOYMENT, OR
15 EXPERIENCED A REDUCTION IN PAY DUE TO A PRINCIPAL'S VIOLATION,
16 THE DETERMINATION MAY INCLUDE AN ORDER TO:

17 (I) REINSTATE OR REHIRE THE WORKER AND PAY THE WORKER'S
18 BACK PAY UNTIL REINSTATEMENT OR REHIRING; OR

19 (II) PAY THE WORKER FRONT PAY FOR A REASONABLE PERIOD
20 AFTER THE ORDER, IF REINSTATEMENT OR REHIRING IS DETERMINED NOT
21 TO BE FEASIBLE.

22 (4) DETERMINATIONS MADE BY THE DIVISION UNDER THIS SECTION
23 ARE APPEALABLE PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-4-111.5 AND RULES
24 PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT REGARDING APPEALS AND STRATEGIC
25 ENFORCEMENT.

26 **8-14.4-106. Relief authorized.** (1) AN AGGRIEVED INDIVIDUAL
27 MAY, WITHIN NINETY DAYS AFTER EXHAUSTING ADMINISTRATIVE

1 REMEDIES PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-105, COMMENCE AN ACTION IN
2 DISTRICT COURT AGAINST A PRINCIPAL FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE
3 14.4.

4 (2) A COURT MAY ORDER AFFIRMATIVE RELIEF THAT THE COURT
5 DETERMINES TO BE APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING RELIEF,
6 AGAINST A RESPONDENT WHO IS FOUND TO HAVE ENGAGED IN A
7 DISCRIMINATORY, ADVERSE, OR RETALIATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE
8 PROHIBITED BY THIS ARTICLE 14.4:

9 (a) REINSTATEMENT OR REHIRING OF A WORKER, WITH OR
10 WITHOUT BACK PAY;

11 (b) THE GREATER OF EITHER:

12 (I) TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS; OR

13 (II) ANY LOST PAY RESULTING FROM THE VIOLATION, INCLUDING
14 BACK PAY FOR A REINSTATED OR REHired WORKER AND FRONT PAY FOR
15 A WORKER WHO IS NOT REINSTATED OR REHired; AND

16 (c) ANY OTHER EQUITABLE RELIEF THE COURT DEEMS
17 APPROPRIATE.

18 (3) (a) IN ADDITION TO THE RELIEF AVAILABLE PURSUANT TO
19 SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION, IN A CIVIL ACTION BROUGHT BY A
20 PLAINTIFF UNDER THIS ARTICLE 14.4 AGAINST A DEFENDANT WHO IS
21 FOUND TO HAVE ENGAGED IN AN INTENTIONAL DISCRIMINATORY,
22 ADVERSE, OR RETALIATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE, THE PLAINTIFF MAY
23 RECOVER COMPENSATORY AND PUNITIVE DAMAGES AS SPECIFIED IN THIS
24 SUBSECTION (3).

25 (b) A PLAINTIFF MAY RECOVER PUNITIVE DAMAGES AGAINST A
26 DEFENDANT IF THE PLAINTIFF DEMONSTRATES BY CLEAR AND CONVINCING
27 EVIDENCE THAT THE DEFENDANT ENGAGED IN A DISCRIMINATORY,

1 ADVERSE, OR RETALIATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE WITH MALICE OR
2 RECKLESS INDIFFERENCE TO THE RIGHTS OF THE PLAINTIFF. HOWEVER, IF
3 THE DEFENDANT DEMONSTRATES GOOD-FAITH EFFORTS TO COMPLY WITH
4 THIS ARTICLE 14.4 AND TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATORY, ADVERSE, AND
5 RETALIATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE, THE COURT
6 SHALL NOT AWARD PUNITIVE DAMAGES AGAINST THE DEFENDANT.

7 (c) A PLAINTIFF MAY RECOVER COMPENSATORY DAMAGES
8 AGAINST A DEFENDANT FOR OTHER PECUNIARY LOSSES, EMOTIONAL PAIN
9 AND SUFFERING, INCONVENIENCE, MENTAL ANGUISH, LOSS OF ENJOYMENT
10 OF LIFE, AND OTHER NONPECUNIARY LOSSES.

11 (d) IN DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF DAMAGES TO
12 AWARD A PLAINTIFF WHO HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF AN INTENTIONAL
13 DISCRIMINATORY, ADVERSE, OR RETALIATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE,
14 THE COURT SHALL CONSIDER THE SIZE AND ASSETS OF THE DEFENDANT
15 AND THE EGREGIOUSNESS OF THE DISCRIMINATORY, ADVERSE, OR
16 RETALIATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE.

17 (e) COMPENSATORY OR PUNITIVE DAMAGES AWARDED PURSUANT
18 TO THIS SUBSECTION (3) ARE IN ADDITION TO, AND DO NOT INCLUDE,
19 FRONT PAY, BACK PAY, INTEREST ON BACK PAY, OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF
20 RELIEF AWARDED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION.

21 (4) IF A PLAINTIFF IN A CIVIL ACTION FILED UNDER THIS ARTICLE
22 14.4 SEEKS COMPENSATORY OR PUNITIVE DAMAGES PURSUANT TO
23 SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION, ANY PARTY TO THE CIVIL ACTION MAY
24 DEMAND A TRIAL BY JURY.

25 (5) THE COURT SHALL AWARD REASONABLE ATTORNEY FEES TO A
26 PLAINTIFF WHO PREVAILS IN AN ACTION BROUGHT PURSUANT TO THIS
27 SECTION.

1 **8-14.4-107. Whistleblower enforcement - qui tam - definition.**

2 (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, "WHISTLEBLOWER" MEANS A WORKER WITH
3 KNOWLEDGE OF AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4, OR THE
4 WORKER'S REPRESENTATIVE.

5 (2) (a) A WHISTLEBLOWER WHO HAS EXHAUSTED THE
6 ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-14.4-105 MAY BRING
7 A CIVIL ACTION AGAINST A PRINCIPAL FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE
8 14.4 ON BEHALF OF THE STATE IN DISTRICT COURT PURSUANT TO THIS
9 SECTION. ~~THE STATE MAY INTERVENE IN THE ACTION TO PROSECUTE IN ITS~~
10 ~~OWN NAME.~~

11 (b) AT THE TIME THAT THE ACTION IS FILED, THE WHISTLEBLOWER
12 SHALL GIVE WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE DIVISION OF THE SPECIFIC
13 PROVISIONS OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4 ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN VIOLATED.

14 (c) IF THE COURT FINDS THAT A VIOLATION HAS OCCURRED, THE
15 COURT MAY ENTER A JUDGMENT AGAINST THE PRINCIPAL OF NOT LESS
16 THAN ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND NOT MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND
17 DOLLARS FOR EACH VIOLATION, AND FOR APPROPRIATE INJUNCTIVE AND
18 EQUITABLE RELIEF. ~~THE COURT SHALL AWARD THE WHISTLEBLOWER~~
19 ~~REASONABLE ATTORNEY FEES. THE ATTORNEY FEES ARE NOT SUBJECT TO~~
20 ~~THE DISTRIBUTION SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION.~~

21 (3) THE PROCEEDS OF ANY JUDGMENT ENTERED PURSUANT TO THIS
22 SECTION SHALL BE DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:

23 (a) SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT TO THE DIVISION FOR ENFORCEMENT
24 OF THIS ARTICLE 14.4; AND

25 (b) TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT TO THE ~~FIRST WHISTLEBLOWER WHO~~
26 FILED THE ACTION.

27 (4) THE RIGHT TO BRING AN ACTION UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL

1 NOT BE IMPAIRED BY ANY PRIVATE CONTRACT. AN ACTION UNDER THIS
2 SECTION SHALL BE TRIED PROMPTLY, WITHOUT REGARD TO CONCURRENT
3 ADJUDICATION OF PRIVATE CLAIMS.

4 **8-14.4-108. Rulemaking.** THE DIVISION MAY PROMULGATE RULES
5 NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS ARTICLE 14.4.

6

7 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-77-109, **add**
8 (2)(a)(II)(C) as follows:

9 **8-77-109. Employment support fund - employment and**
10 **training technology fund - created - uses.** (2) (a) The state treasurer
11 shall credit the moneys collected pursuant to this section to the
12 employment support fund created in subsection (1) of this section. The
13 general assembly shall appropriate the moneys in the employment support
14 fund annually to the department of labor and employment:

15 (II) (C) (i) TO FUND THE ADMINISTRATION OF ARTICLE 14.4 OF THIS
16 TITLE 8.

17 (ii) THIS SUBSECTION (2)(a)(II)(C) is repealed, effective July 1,
18 2022.

19 **SECTION 3. Appropriation.** (1) For the 2020-21 state fiscal
20 year, \$270,153 is appropriated to the department of labor and
21 employment. This appropriation is from the employment support fund
22 created in section 8-77-109 (1)(b), C.R.S. To implement this act, the
23 department may use this appropriation as follows:

24 (a) \$206,193 for use by for use by the division of labor standards
25 and statistics for enforcement of workers' rights related to a public health
26 emergency, which amount is based on an assumption that the division will
27 require an additional 2.5 FTE; and

1 (b) \$63,960 for the purchase of legal services.

9 **SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
10 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
11 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.