

2020 -- H 7539

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LC004220
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

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A N A C T

RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- PAYMENT OF WAGES

Introduced By: Representatives Craven, McEntee, McKiernan, and Millea

Date Introduced: February 12, 2020

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 28-14-17 of the General Laws in Chapter 28-14 entitled "Payment
2 of Wages" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **28-14-17. Penalty for violations.**

4 (a) Any employer who violates or fails to comply with any of the provisions of this
5 chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, if the value of the wages due to an employee is less than
6 one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500), and upon conviction ~~of the misdemeanor~~, the
7 employer shall be punished by a fine of not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) for each
8 separate offense, or by imprisonment of up to one year, or by both fine and imprisonment. Each
9 day of failure to pay wages in any amount set forth in this section and due an employee at the
10 time specified in this chapter shall constitute a separate and distinct violation.

11 (b) Any employer who violates or fails to comply with any of the provisions of this
12 chapter shall be guilty of a felony if the value of the wages due to an employee exceeds one
13 thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) and, upon conviction, shall be subject to the following
14 penalties:

15 (1) If the value exceeds one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500), and is less than five
16 thousand dollars (\$5,000), by imprisonment for not more than three (3) years or by a fine of not
17 more than one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500), or both:

18 (2) If the value exceeds five thousand dollars (\$5,000), but is less than ten thousand
19 dollars (\$10,000), by imprisonment for not more than six (6) years or by a fine of not more than

1 three thousand dollars (\$3,000), or both; and
2 (3) If the value exceeds ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), by imprisonment for not more
3 than ten (10) years or by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

4 ~~(b)~~(c) Any employer found civilly liable or guilty of violations of this chapter by the
5 department or a court of competent jurisdiction who does not pay wages and fines within thirty
6 (30) days of a final decision and after notification by the department of labor and training, may
7 have his, her or its business license revoked by the state of Rhode Island until he, she or it pays
8 such wages and fines in full or enters into a payment agreement with which he, she or it stays in
9 compliance.

10 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- PAYMENT OF WAGES

1 This act would make violations or failures to comply with any provisions of the chapter
2 relating to payment of wages by any employer a felony if the value of the unpaid wages amounts
3 to more than one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500). Upon conviction of the offense the
4 employer would be punished by fines, or imprisonment, or both.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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