

Assembly Bill No. 561

Passed the Assembly September 8, 2015

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Passed the Senate September 3, 2015

Secretary of the Senate

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2015, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to amend Section 1149 of, and to add Sections 1149.3 and 1162 to, the Labor Code, relating to agricultural labor relations.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 561, Campos. Agricultural labor relations.

(1) The Alatorre-Zenovich-Dunlap-Berman Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 regulates employer-employee relations in agriculture. The act, among other things, prohibits agricultural employers and employees from engaging in unfair labor practices, as defined, and empowers the Agricultural Labor Relations Board to prevent any person from engaging in those practices. The act provides for a general counsel of the board and grants the general counsel final authority with respect to the investigation of charges and the issuance and prosecution of complaints regarding unfair labor practices.

This bill would require the board to process to final board order all decisions concerning make-whole awards, backpay, and other monetary awards to employees within one year or any board order finding liability for an award. The bill would also make related technical, nonsubstantive changes.

(2) The act grants employees the right to engage in collective bargaining with respect to wages, terms of employment, and other employment conditions, and authorizes employees to elect exclusive bargaining representatives for these purposes. The act, if certain conditions are met, requires the employer and exclusive bargaining representative to engage in mandatory mediation and conciliation of their issues, and authorizes both parties to appeal orders of the board based on this mandatory mediation and conciliation, as specified.

This bill would require an employer who appeals or petitions for a writ of review of any order of the board under the act involving make-whole, backpay, or other monetary awards to employees to post a bond in the amount of the entire economic value of the order, as specified, and would provide for the bond to be forfeited under specified conditions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1149 of the Labor Code is amended to read:

1149. There shall be a general counsel of the board who shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by a majority of the Senate, for a term of four years. The general counsel shall have the power to appoint those attorneys, administrative assistants, and other employees as necessary for the proper exercise of his or her duties. The general counsel of the board shall exercise general supervision over all attorneys employed by the board (other than administrative law officers and legal assistants to board members), and over the officers and employees in the regional offices. The general counsel shall have final authority, on behalf of the board, with respect to the investigation of charges and issuance of complaints under Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 1160) of this part, and with respect to the prosecution of those complaints before the board. The general counsel shall have those other duties as the board may prescribe or as may be provided by law. All employees appointed by the general counsel shall perform their duties in an objective and impartial manner without prejudice toward any party subject to the jurisdiction of the board. In case of a vacancy in the office of the general counsel, the Governor is authorized to designate the officer or employee who shall act as general counsel during that vacancy, but no person or persons so designated shall so act either (1) for more than 40 days when the Legislature is in session unless a nomination to fill that vacancy has been submitted to the Senate, or (2) after the adjournment sine die of the session of the Senate in which the nomination was submitted.

SEC. 2. Section 1149.3 is added to the Labor Code, to read:

1149.3. The board shall be required to process to final board order all decisions concerning make-whole awards, backpay, and other monetary awards to employees, within one year of any board order finding liability for that award. If the board has already made a finding that an employer is liable for a make-whole, backpay, or any other monetary award to an employee or employees, and a compliance proceeding is necessary to determine the specific amount owed by the employer, the board shall be required to process to final board order a decision concerning the amount or

amounts owed within one year of the time that a final decision on employer liability has been made by the board. For purposes of this section, a final decision on employer liability shall be defined as either the date when a board order concerning liability becomes final because no appeal was sought or the date when a reviewing court dismisses an employer's appeal or decides in favor of the board concerning the employer's liability. If an employer's liability and compliance proceedings are consolidated, the board shall act reasonably and without delay in reaching a final decision concerning the liability and amounts owed to workers.

SEC. 3. Section 1162 is added to the Labor Code, to read:

1162. (a) An employer who petitions for a writ of review in the court of appeal or the California Supreme Court or otherwise appeals or seeks to overturn or stay any order of the board under the Alatorre-Zenovich-Dunlap-Berman Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 involving make-whole, backpay, or other monetary awards to employees shall, as a condition to seeking review or appeal, post a bond, in the amount of the entire economic value of the order as determined by the board, to ensure that employees receive the benefits of the order if the employer does not prevail.

(b) The bond shall consist of an appeal bond issued by a licensed surety or a cash deposit with the board in the amount of the order, decision, or award. The employer shall provide written notification to all of the parties of the posting of the bond. The bond shall be on the condition that, if any judgment is entered against the employer, the employer shall pay the amount owed pursuant to the judgment, and if the appeal is withdrawn or dismissed without entry of judgment, the employer shall pay the amount owed pursuant to the order, decision, or award of the board unless the parties have executed a settlement agreement for payment of some other amount, in which case the employer shall pay the amount that the employer is obligated to pay under the terms of the settlement agreement. If the employer fails to pay the amount owed within 10 days of entry of the judgment, dismissal, or withdrawal of the appeal, or the execution of a settlement agreement, the bond is forfeited to the employee or employees.

Approved _____, 2015

Governor