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S.F. No. 3588 – Unemployment for striking workers (A-1)

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S.F. 3588 amends existing unemployment law related to labor disputes so that a striking worker would not be automatically ineligible for unemployment benefits during a dispute. Under current law, workers who leave employment due to participating in a strike or labor dispute are presumed ineligible for unemployment benefits for the duration of the strike or dispute.

Section 1 changes the presumption to one of eligibility for striking workers. If the striking worker otherwise meets unemployment eligibility requirements, they could be eligible for benefits from the time the labor dispute begins. A worker striking due to a labor dispute would not be considered to have quit, been discharged, suspended, or be on a leave of absence at the time the labor dispute begins, so as to make them ineligible. And if a striking worker does quit or is discharged during the strike or labor dispute, the effective date would be the date of the quit or discharge.

Section 2 amends the definition of what constitutes “actively seeking suitable employment” for an applicant that is a union member to allow a union member’s participation in a labor dispute.