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H.523

Introduced by Representatives Wizowaty of Burlington, Clarkson of  
Woodstock, Davis of Washington, Donovan of Burlington,  
Fisher of Lincoln, Lorber of Burlington, Masland of Thetford,  
Mook of Bennington, Moran of Wardsboro, Poirier of Barre  
City, Ram of Burlington, Spengler of Colchester and Webb of  
Shelburne

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Labor; conditions of employment; employment breaks

Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to require that employers provide  
employees with work breaks for meals and rest.

An act relating to requiring employment breaks

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 21 V.S.A. § 304 is amended to read:

§ 304. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS; EMPLOYMENT BREAKS

(a) An employer shall provide ~~an~~ each employee with paid or unpaid  
breaks from employment totaling at least 30 minutes during each six hours of  
work to assure that employees have reasonable opportunities ~~during work~~  
~~periods to eat and to use toilet facilities in order to protect the health and~~

1 ~~hygiene of the employee~~ to eat, rest, and use toilet facilities. The employment  
2 breaks shall be scheduled at least two hours after the work period commences  
3 and no later than two hours before the work period ends.

4 (b) An employer may adopt an employment break policy more generous  
5 than that provided by this section. Nothing in this section shall be construed to  
6 diminish an employer's obligation to comply with any collective bargaining  
7 agreement or any employment benefit program or plan that provides greater  
8 leave rights than the rights provided by this section. A collective bargaining  
9 agreement or employment benefit program or plan may not diminish the rights  
10 provided by this section.

11 (c) An employer shall not retaliate or discriminate against an employee for  
12 asserting the employee's rights provided by this section.

13 (d) An employee who is aggrieved by a violation of this section may bring  
14 a civil action for equitable and other appropriate relief, including  
15 reinstatement, civil damages in the amount of three times the employee's  
16 hourly wage multiplied by the number of hours of break time that the  
17 employee was denied, costs, and reasonable attorney fees.