Virginia McInerney *Legislative Service Commission*

S.B. 75

126th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Sens. Dann, Brady, Fedor, Fingerhut, Hagan, Mallory, Miller, Prentiss, Roberts, Wilson, Zurz

BILL SUMMARY

- Modifies one of the criterion for eligibility for unemployment compensation benefits by requiring that an individual earn remuneration for at least 20 hours in each qualifying week (minimum of 20 weeks required), or an average of 20 hours per qualifying week for the total number of qualifying weeks, instead of requiring that an individual be paid an average weekly wage of not less than 27.5% of the statewide average weekly wage during those qualifying weeks, which for 2005, equals a minimum of $186.

- Correspondingly requires the Director of Job and Family Services to make proportional adjustments regarding the number of hours an individual must have worked per week when establishing eligibility criteria for individuals who become unemployed from seasonal employment.

- Makes the bill's provisions applicable to claims filed on or after 90 days after the bill's effective date.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Background

The Unemployment Compensation Law (R.C. Chapter 4141.) specifies certain conditions that an individual must meet and procedures the individual must follow in order to qualify for unemployment compensation benefits. It also outlines conditions under which an individual who loses a job is disqualified from receiving benefits and specifies conditions under which that individual may remove the disqualification. Generally, an individual qualifies for benefits if the individual files a valid application for benefits, makes a proper claim for benefits,

registers at an employment office, and is available and actively searching for work.

An application for determination of benefit rights is valid if the individual filing the application is unemployed, was separated for a nondisqualifying reason, previously was employed by an employer or employers who are subject to the Unemployment Compensation Law in at least 20 qualifying weeks[1] within the individual's base period,[2] and has earned or been paid during those qualifying weeks remuneration at an average weekly wage of not less than 27.5% of the statewide average weekly wage (recalculated each calendar year). In 2005, an applicant must have an average weekly wage of at least $186 to qualify for benefits. The Director of Job and Family Services proportionately adjusts the remuneration amount and number of qualifying weeks of employment required when establishing eligibility criteria for individuals who become unemployed from seasonal employment. (Secs. 4141.01, 4141.29, and 4141.33.)

<u>The bill</u>

The bill requires that an individual earn remuneration for at least 20 hours in each qualifying week, or an average of 20 hours per qualifying week for the total number of qualifying weeks, instead of requiring that an individual be paid an average weekly wage that is not less than 27.5% of the statewide average weekly wage for those qualifying weeks. Correspondingly, the bill also requires the Director to make proportional adjustments regarding the number of hours an

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[1] *A "qualifying week" is any calendar week in an individual's base period with respect to which the individual earns or is paid remuneration in employment subject to the Unemployment Compensation Law (R.C. Chapter 4141.). A calendar week with respect to which an individual earns remuneration but for which payment was not made within the base period, when necessary to qualify for benefit rights, may be considered a qualifying week.*

[2] *"Base period" means the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the first day of an individual's benefit year, except that if an individual does not have sufficient qualifying weeks and wages in the base period to qualify for benefit rights, the individual's base period is the four most recently completed calendar quarters preceding the first day of the individual's benefit year, which is referred to as the "alternate base period."*

"Benefit year" means the 52 week period beginning with the first day of the week with respect to which the individual first files a valid application for determination of benefit rights, and thereafter the 52 week period beginning with the first day of the week with respect to which the individual next files a valid application for determination of benefit rights after the termination of the individual's last preceding benefit year.

individual must have worked per week when establishing eligibility criteria for individuals who become unemployed from seasonal employment. Consequently, under the bill, the amount of remuneration an individual earns is not a factor in determining eligibility for benefits. (Secs. 4141.01(R)(1) and 4141.33(B).)

The bill's provisions apply to claims that are filed on or after 90 days after the bill's effective date. (Section 3.)

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	02-22-05	p. 196

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