

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 111
By: Ellis
Technology, Economic Development & Workforce
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, state law requires that for an individual to be eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, the individual must be totally or partially unemployed for seven consecutive days before receiving payment of benefits. Current law also allows an individual to receive benefits earned during the seven day waiting period if the individual has earned three times the individual's benefit in unemployment benefits during that year.

Thousands of individuals were temporarily unable to work in Texas due to Hurricane Ike, but were able to return to work relatively quickly. Those individuals could not meet the waiting period requirement and were unable to receive unemployment compensation benefits for that week.

S.B. 111 authorizes the governor to suspend the waiting period requirement for unemployment compensation for individuals that are unemployed as a direct result of a natural disaster.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 111 amends the Labor Code to authorize the governor, by executive order, to suspend the unemployment compensation waiting period requirement to authorize an individual to receive benefits for that waiting period if the individual is unemployed as a direct result of a natural disaster that results in a disaster declaration by the U.S. president under federal law, is otherwise eligible for unemployment compensation benefits under the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act, and is not receiving disaster unemployment assistance benefits for the period included in that waiting period. The bill defines "disaster unemployment assistance benefits."

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.