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S.B. No. 1421

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the adoption of modernizations to unemployment compensation benefit eligibility.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 201, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 201.011(1)(c) to read as follows:

(c) For an individual who does not have sufficient benefit wage credits to qualify for benefits under the computation of the base period as provided by Subsection (a) or (b), the base period is the four most recently completed calendar quarters preceding the first day of the individual's benefit year.

SECTION 2. Section 207.021, Labor Code, is amended by adding Subsection (d) and (e) to read as follows:

(d) "Part-time work" means work having comparable hours to the individual's work in the individual's base period, except that an individual must be available for at least 20 hours of work per week and available for hours that are comparable to the individual's work at the time of the individual's most recent separation from employment.

(e) An individual is available for work for purposes of Subsection (a)(4) if the individual is seeking only part-time work, unless the majority of the weeks worked by the individual during the individual's base period do not include part-time work.

SECTION 3. Chapter 209, Labor Code, is amended by adding

1 Subchapter F to read as follows:

2 SUBCHAPTER F. EXTENDED BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS ENROLLED  
3 IN CERTAIN TRAINING PROGRAMS

4 Sec. 209.101. ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTENDED BENEFITS.

5 Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, an individual  
6 is entitled to extended benefits as provided by this subchapter if  
7 the individual:

8 (1) is unemployed;

9 (2) has exhausted all regular benefits; and

10 (3) is enrolled in, and making satisfactory progress  
11 toward completion of, a commission-approved training program or a  
12 job training program under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29  
13 U.S.C. Section 2801 et seq.) designed to prepare individuals who  
14 have been separated from a declining occupation or who have been  
15 involuntarily and indefinitely separated from employment as a  
16 result of a permanent reduction of operations at the individual's  
17 place of employment for entry into a high-demand occupation.

18 Sec. 209.102. DURATION AND AMOUNT OF EXTENDED BENEFITS.

19 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, an  
20 eligible individual under Section 209.101 is entitled to receive  
21 extended benefits under this subchapter until the earlier of:

22 (1) the date the individual completes the training  
23 program; or

24 (2) the expiration of 26 additional benefit periods.

25 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter,  
26 the weekly amount of extended benefits payable to an eligible  
27 individual under Section 209.101 is an amount equal to the

1 individual's average weekly benefit amount for the most recent  
2 benefit year.

3           SECTION 4. This Act applies only to eligibility for  
4 unemployment compensation benefits based on a claim that is filed  
5 with the Texas Workforce Commission on or after the effective date  
6 of this Act. A claim filed before the effective date of this Act is  
7 governed by the law in effect on the date the claim was filed, and  
8 the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

9           SECTION 5. This Act takes effect on September 1, 2009.