

## CCS SCS HCS HB 1075 -- UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

This bill changes the laws regarding unemployment compensation.

### UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION FUND

The bill removes the provision which prohibits the unpaid principal amount of outstanding credit instruments in the Unemployment Compensation Fund, combined with the unpaid principal amount of any financing agreement authorized and issued by the Board of Unemployment Fund Financing, from exceeding \$450 million at any one time and removes the provision which prohibits the current total amount of outstanding obligations under all financial agreements entered into by the board from exceeding the difference of \$450 million and the principal amount of outstanding credit instruments.

### FEDERAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Certain provisions are changed regarding the state's eligibility to receive federal extended unemployment benefit money to provide unemployed individuals benefits beyond the current unemployment benefit period and the amount of the extended unemployment benefits an eligible individual can receive. Beginning February 1, 2009, and ending December 5, 2009, the state is eligible to receive federal extended unemployment benefit money when:

- (1) The average state unemployment rate as determined by the United States Secretary of Labor for the most recent three-month period is 6.5% or higher; and
- (2) The average state unemployment rate of 6.5% or higher exceeds 110% of the average of the unemployment rate for either or both of the corresponding three-month periods ending in the two preceding calendar years.

The bill specifies that an individual will be eligible to receive federal extended unemployment benefits in a high unemployment period if he or she has exhausted all state benefits. "High unemployment period" means any period during which the state unemployment rate for the most recent three-month period is 8% or higher. The total amount of extended benefits an eligible unemployed individual may receive is the lesser of:

- (1) 80% for 50% of the total unemployment benefit amount which was payable in the applicable benefit year; or
- (2) 20 times for 13 times the weekly benefit amount which was payable for a week of total unemployment in the applicable

benefit year.

#### EXPANDED FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The state is authorized to receive federal unemployment benefit money pending certification by the United States Secretary of Labor under 42 U.S.C.1103, as amended by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, commonly known as the federal economic stimulus act, for expanding unemployment compensation eligibility criteria. No claimant will be disqualified from unemployment compensation if he or she is separated from work for compelling family reasons including:

- (1) The illness or disability of a member of the claimant's immediate family;
- (2) The need for the claimant to accompany the claimant's spouse to a location from which it is impractical for the claimant to commute due to a change in location of the spouse's employment; or
- (3) Verified domestic violence which causes the claimant to reasonably believe that the claimant's continued employment would jeopardize his or her safety or the safety of any member of the claimant's family as defined by the United States Secretary of Labor.

A claimant who is training under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or director-approved training under Section 288.055, RSMo, and who has exhausted his or her regular unemployment benefits will be eligible for additional benefits up to 26 times the amount of his or her weekly benefit amount. The training benefits will be paid under the same terms and conditions as the claimant's regular benefits and after any extended benefits or similar benefits have been paid by a federally funded program. Priority for training funds must be given to claimants laid off through no fault of their own from Missouri automobile manufacturing facilities.

The provisions regarding the expanded eligibility criteria for federal unemployment benefits must be renewed in the next regular session of the General Assembly or they will expire when the funds provided by the federal act are expended. These provisions will not take effect and no benefits will be paid unless first certified by the United States Secretary of Labor under federal regulations.

The bill contains an emergency clause.