

By: Representative Sykes

To: Workforce Development;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 14

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 71-5-503, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO INCREASE AN INDIVIDUAL'S WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT BY FORTY
3 DOLLARS; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 71-5-505, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
4 1972, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; AND FOR RELATED
5 PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 71-5-503, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 71-5-503. An individual's weekly benefit amount for a
10 benefit year shall be one-twenty-sixth (1/26) of his or her total
11 wages for insured work paid during that quarter of his or her base
12 period in which such total wages were highest, computed to the
13 next lower multiple of One Dollar (\$1.00), if not a multiple of
14 One Dollar (\$1.00).

15 On or before June 15 of each year, the total wages reported
16 on contribution reports for the preceding calendar year shall be
17 divided by the average monthly number of insured workers
18 (determined by dividing the total insured workers reported on
19 contribution reports pursuant to the regulations of the department



20 for the preceding year by twelve (12)). The average annual wage
21 thus obtained shall be divided by fifty-two (52) and the average
22 weekly wage thus determined rounded to the nearest cent. Sixty
23 percent (60%) of this amount, rounded to the nearest dollar, shall
24 constitute the maximum "weekly benefit amount" paid to any
25 individual whose benefit year commences on or after July 1 of such
26 year and * * * before July 1 of the next following year; * * *
27 however, * * * the maximum weekly benefit amount shall not exceed
28 Two Hundred Ten Dollars (\$210.00) for any benefit year that begins
29 on or after July 1, 2002, and shall not exceed Two Hundred Thirty
30 Dollars (\$230.00) for any benefit year that begins on or after
31 July 1, 2008, and shall not exceed Two Hundred Thirty-five Dollars
32 (\$235.00) for any benefit year that begins on or after July 1,
33 2009. The minimum weekly benefit amount for the individual shall
34 be * * * Seventy Dollars (\$70.00). If an individual's weekly
35 benefit amount would compute to less than the * * * that minimum,
36 then such individual would be entitled to no benefits.

37 An individual's weekly benefit amount, as determined at the
38 beginning of his or her benefit year, shall constitute his or her
39 weekly benefit amount throughout such benefit year.

40 The Mississippi Department of Employment Security, with the
41 assistance of the United States Department of Labor, is directed
42 to generate actuarially sound models for computation of weekly
43 benefit amounts. Such models shall include scenarios for
44 increasing the weekly benefit amounts at each increment from the



45 minimum to the maximum amount and the impact such increments would
46 have on the Unemployment Compensation Fund. Such report shall be
47 provided to the Mississippi Legislature on or before December 31,
48 2008.

49 **SECTION 2.** Section 71-5-505, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
50 brought forward as follows:

51 71-5-505. (1) For weeks beginning on or after July 1, 1991,
52 each eligible individual who is totally unemployed or part totally
53 unemployed in any week shall be paid with respect to such week a
54 benefit in an amount equal to his weekly benefit amount less that
55 part of his wages, if any, payable to him with respect to such
56 week which is in excess of Forty Dollars (\$40.00). Such
57 individuals must have been totally unemployed or part totally
58 unemployed for a waiting period of one (1) week during which he
59 earned less than his weekly benefit amount plus Forty Dollars
60 (\$40.00). Such benefit for a benefit year effective on or after
61 October 1, 1983, if not a multiple of One Dollar (\$1.00), shall be
62 computed to the next lower multiple of One Dollar (\$1.00).
63 Provided, however, that remuneration for "inactive duty training"
64 or "unit training assembly" payable to such eligible individual
65 who is a member of any of the reserve components, or remuneration
66 for jury duty pursuant to a lawfully issued summons therefor
67 payable to such eligible individual, shall not be considered wages
68 which serve to reduce the otherwise payable benefit amount.



69 In determining whether an eligible individual is unemployed
70 during a week, the date of commencing a shift shall determine the
71 week for which the earnings are deducted.

72 (2) However, the one-week waiting period described herein
73 shall be waived if the President of the United States declares a
74 major disaster with regard to individual assistance in accordance
75 with Section 401 of The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
76 Emergency Assistance Act. The department, in its discretion,
77 shall have the authority to noncharge an employer account for any
78 benefits paid for unemployment due directly to such disaster, but
79 only in those counties and/or areas identified by the disaster
80 area for individual assistance.

81 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
82 and after July 1, 2018.

