

HOUSE BILL NO. 1577

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 71-5-507, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REVISE THE DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS; TO
3 BRING FORWARD SECTION 71-5-503, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR THE
4 PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 71-5-507, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 71-5-507. * * * (1) The maximum number of weekly benefits a
9 claimant may be eligible for in a benefit year shall depend on the
10 average, seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the state for
11 the three (3) months preceding the month in which they file their
12 first claim of a benefit year. The following defines the maximum
13 number of weekly benefits available based upon the average
14 statewide unemployment rate as determined by the department
15 according to subsection (2) of this section:

16 (a) When the average unemployment rate is five percent
17 (5%) or less, twelve (12) times the weekly benefit amount.

18 (b) When the average unemployment rate is more than
19 five percent (5%) but not more than seven percent (7%), sixteen
20 (16) times the weekly benefit amount.

21 (c) When the average unemployment rate is more than
22 eight and one-half percent (8.5%), twenty (20) times the weekly
23 benefit amount.

24 (2) In calculating the average unemployment rate for the
25 purpose of determining benefit duration in subsection (1), the
26 department shall use publicly reported, seasonally adjusted
27 unemployment rate figures for the state. On a monthly basis, the
28 department shall publish on its website the average unemployment
29 rate and the amount of weekly benefits available for claimants who
30 file an initial claim for unemployment benefits in that month.

31 (3) An individual's total amount of regular benefits as
32 determined at the beginning of his benefit year shall constitute
33 his amount of regular benefits throughout such benefit year.

34 **SECTION 2.** Section 71-5-503, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
35 brought forward as follows:

36 71-5-503. An individual's weekly benefit amount for a
37 benefit year shall be one-twenty-sixth (1/26) of his total wages
38 for insured work paid during that quarter of his base period in
39 which such total wages were highest, computed to the next lower
40 multiple of One Dollar (\$1.00), if not a multiple of One Dollar
41 (\$1.00).



42 On or before June 15 of each year, the total wages reported
43 on contribution reports for the preceding calendar year shall be
44 divided by the average monthly number of insured workers
45 (determined by dividing the total insured workers reported on
46 contribution reports pursuant to the regulations of the department
47 for the preceding year by twelve (12)). The average annual wage
48 thus obtained shall be divided by fifty-two (52) and the average
49 weekly wage thus determined rounded to the nearest cent. Sixty
50 percent (60%) of this amount, rounded to the nearest dollar, shall
51 constitute the maximum "weekly benefit amount" paid to any
52 individual whose benefit year commences on or after July 1 of such
53 year and prior to July 1 of the next following year; provided
54 however, that the maximum weekly benefit amount shall not exceed
55 Two Hundred Ten Dollars (\$210.00) for any benefit year that begins
56 on or after July 1, 2002, and shall not exceed Two Hundred Thirty
57 Dollars (\$230.00) for any benefit year that begins on or after
58 July 1, 2008, and shall not exceed Two Hundred Thirty-five Dollars
59 (\$235.00) for any benefit year that begins on or after July 1,
60 2009. The minimum weekly benefit amount for the individual shall
61 be Thirty Dollars (\$30.00). If an individual's weekly benefit
62 amount would compute to less than the said minimum, then such
63 individual would be entitled to no benefits.

64 An individual's weekly benefit amount, as determined at the
65 beginning of his benefit year, shall constitute his weekly benefit
66 amount throughout such benefit year.

67 The Mississippi Department of Employment Security, with the
68 assistance of the United States Department of Labor, is directed
69 to generate actuarially sound models for computation of weekly
70 benefit amounts. Such models shall include scenarios for
71 increasing the weekly benefit amounts at each increment from the
72 minimum to the maximum amount and the impact such increments would
73 have on the Unemployment Compensation Fund. Such report shall be
74 provided to the Mississippi Legislature on or before December 31,
75 2008.

76 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
77 and after July 1, 2025.

