

By: Representative Hurst

To: Business and Commerce;  
Appropriations E

## 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).



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

An individual's weekly benefit amount, as determined at the beginning of his benefit year, shall constitute his weekly benefit 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.

