

By Senator Bracy

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to reemployment assistance; amending
3 s. 443.111, F.S.; increasing the maximum weekly and
4 yearly benefit amounts for reemployment assistance;
5 increasing the duration of such benefits; reenacting
6 ss. 443.041 and 443.1116, F.S., relating to attorney
7 fees and short-time compensation, respectively, to
8 incorporate the amendments made to s. 443.111, F.S.,
9 in a reference thereto; providing an effective date.

10
11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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13 Section 1. Subsection (3) and paragraphs (b) and (c) of
14 subsection (5) of section 443.111, Florida Statutes, are amended
15 to read:

16 443.111 Payment of benefits.—

17 (3) WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT.—An individual's "weekly benefit
18 amount" is an amount equal to one twenty-sixth of the total
19 wages for insured work paid during that quarter of the base
20 period in which the total wages paid were the highest, but not
21 less than \$32 or more than \$400 ~~\$275~~. The weekly benefit amount,
22 if not a multiple of \$1, is rounded downward to the nearest full
23 dollar amount. The maximum weekly benefit amount in effect at
24 the time the claimant establishes an individual weekly benefit
25 amount is the maximum benefit amount applicable throughout the
26 claimant's benefit year.

27 (5) DURATION OF BENEFITS.—

28 (b) Each otherwise eligible individual is entitled during
29 any benefit year to a total amount of benefits equal to 25

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30 percent of the total wages in his or her base period, not to
31 exceed \$10,400 ~~\$6,325~~ or the product arrived at by multiplying
32 the weekly benefit amount with the number of weeks determined in
33 paragraph (c), whichever is less. However, the total amount of
34 benefits, if not a multiple of \$1, is rounded downward to the
35 nearest full dollar amount. These benefits are payable at a
36 weekly rate no greater than the weekly benefit amount.

37 (c) For claims submitted during a calendar year, the
38 duration of benefits is limited to 26 weeks+

39 ~~1. Twelve weeks if this state's average unemployment rate
40 is at or below 5 percent.~~

41 ~~2. An additional week in addition to the 12 weeks for each
42 0.5 percent increment in this state's average unemployment rate
43 above 5 percent.~~

44 ~~3. Up to a maximum of 23 weeks if this state's average
45 unemployment rate equals or exceeds 10.5 percent.~~

46 Section 2. For the purpose of incorporating the amendments
47 made by this act to section 443.111, Florida Statutes, in a
48 reference thereto, paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section
49 443.041, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

50 443.041 Waiver of rights; fees; privileged communications.-

51 (2) FEES.-

52 (b) An attorney at law representing a claimant for benefits
53 in any district court of appeal of this state or in the Supreme
54 Court of Florida is entitled to counsel fees payable by the
55 department as set by the court if the petition for review or
56 appeal is initiated by the claimant and results in a decision
57 awarding more benefits than provided in the decision from which
58 appeal was taken. The amount of the fee may not exceed 50

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59 percent of the total amount of regular benefits permitted under
60 s. 443.111(5)(b) during the benefit year.

61 Section 3. For the purpose of incorporating the amendments
62 made by this act to section 443.111, Florida Statutes, in a
63 reference thereto, subsection (7) and paragraph (a) of
64 subsection (8) of section 443.1116, Florida Statutes, are
65 reenacted to read:

66 443.1116 Short-time compensation.—

67 (7) TOTAL SHORT-TIME COMPENSATION BENEFIT AMOUNT.—An
68 individual may not be paid benefits under this section in any
69 benefit year for more than the maximum entitlement provided in
70 s. 443.111(5), and an individual may not be paid short-time
71 compensation benefits for more than 26 weeks in any benefit
72 year.

73 (8) EFFECT OF SHORT-TIME COMPENSATION BENEFITS RELATING TO
74 THE PAYMENT OF REGULAR AND EXTENDED BENEFITS.—

75 (a) The short-time compensation benefits paid to an
76 individual shall be deducted from the total benefit amount
77 established for that individual in s. 443.111(5).

78 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.