

Senate Bill 508

By: Senators Thompson of the 33rd, Stokes of the 43rd and Tanksley of the 32nd

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 employment security, so as to change the provisions relating to benefit experience and
3 variations from the standard rate; to change the provisions relating to the State-wide Reserve
4 Ratio; to change certain time periods; to change the provisions relating to determination of
5 the weekly benefit amount; to provide that certain persons may be unemployed through no
6 fault of their own due to their status as victims of domestic violence and may therefore be
7 eligible for unemployment compensation; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
8 laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

10 Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to employment
11 security, is amended by striking subsection (f) of Code Section 34-8-155, relating to benefit
12 experience and variations from the standard rate, and inserting in its place the following:

13 "(f)(1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection, contribution rates for
14 experience rated employers for the time periods:

15 (A) January 1, 2000, to December 31, 2000;

16 (B) January 1, 2001, to December 31, 2001;

17 (C) January 1, 2002, to December 31, 2002; and

18 (D) January 1, 2003, to December 31, 2003; and

19 ~~(E) January 1, 2004, to December 31, 2004~~

20 shall not be imposed above the level of 1.0 percent of statutory contribution rates.

21 (2) ~~In addition to and not in substitution of the provisions of paragraph (4) of subsection~~
22 ~~(d) of Code Section 34-8-156, if at any time during the five-year time period commencing~~
23 ~~January 1, 2000, and ending December 31, 2004, the State-wide Reserve Ratio equals~~
24 ~~1.25 or less, the provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection shall become null and void~~
25 ~~and of no further purpose or effect for any subsequent time periods identified therein; and~~
26

1 ~~provided further, the~~ The Governor shall have authority to suspend by executive order
 2 any future portion of ~~said~~ the reduction in calculated rates ~~as provided for~~ in paragraph
 3 (1) of this subsection in the event the Governor determines, upon the recommendation of
 4 the Commissioner, that suspension of said reduction is in the best interests of the State
 5 of Georgia."

6 SECTION 2.

7 Said chapter is further amended by striking subparagraph (B) of paragraph (4) of subsection
 8 (d) of Code Section 34-8-156, relating to State-wide Reserve Ratio and reduction in tax rate,
 9 and inserting in its place the following:

10 "(B) Except for any year or portion of a year during which the provisions of paragraph
 11 (1) of subsection (f) of Code Section 34-8-155 apply, when the State-wide Reserve
 12 Ratio, as calculated above, is less than 1.7 percent, there shall be an overall increase in
 13 the rate, as of the computation date, for each employer whose rate is computed under
 14 a rate table in Code Section 34-8-155 in accordance with the following table:

15 If the State-wide Reserve Ratio:

16	Equals or	But Is	Overall
17	<u>Exceeds</u>	<u>Less Than</u>	<u>Increase</u>
18	1.5 percent	1.7 percent	25 percent
19	1.25 percent	1.5 percent	50 percent
20	0.75 percent	1.25 percent	75 percent
21	Under 0.75 percent		100 percent
22	<u>Under 1.5 percent</u>		<u>50 percent</u> "

23 SECTION 3.

24 Said chapter is further amended by striking subsection (c) of Code Section 34-8-193, relating
 25 to determination of the weekly benefit amount, and inserting in its place the following:

26 "(c) Weekly benefit amount entitlement as computed in this Code section shall not exceed
 27 these amounts for the applicable time period:

- 28 (1) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1990, but before July 1, 1994, the maximum
 29 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$185.00;
- 30 (2) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1994, but before July 1, 1995, the maximum
 31 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$195.00;
- 32 (3) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1995, but before July 1, 1996, the maximum
 33 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$205.00;
- 34 (4) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1996, but before July 1, 1997, the maximum

1 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$215.00;

2 (5) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1997, but before July 1, 1998, the maximum
3 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$224.00;

4 (6) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1998, but before July 1, 1999, the maximum
5 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$244.00;

6 (7) For claims filed on or after July 1, 1999, but before July 1, 2000, the maximum
7 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$264.00;

8 (8) For claims filed on or after July 1, 2000, but before July 1, 2001, the maximum
9 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$274.00; and

10 (9) For claims filed on or after July 1, 2001, but before July 1, 2002, the maximum
11 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$284.00;

12 (10) For claims filed on or after July 1, 2002, but before July 1, 2003, the maximum
13 weekly benefit amount shall not exceed \$290.00;

14 (11) For claims filed on or after July 1, 2003, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall
15 not exceed \$300.00.

16 ~~Provided, however, for the period on or after January 1, 2000 2003, whenever the~~
17 ~~State-wide Reserve Ratio, as defined in Code Section 34-8-156, is 1.25 percent or less, no~~
18 ~~future increase in the weekly benefit amount shall be effective until the State-wide Reserve~~
19 ~~Ratio is over 1.25 percent."~~

20 SECTION 4.

21 Said chapter is further amended by adding a new Code Section 34-8-194.1 to read as follows:

22 "34-8-194.1.

23 Benefits shall not be denied to an individual when the individual has filed an otherwise
24 valid claim for benefits after separation from such individual's most recent work due to
25 circumstances resulting from the individual's status as a victim of domestic violence,
26 provided that such individual took reasonable steps to preserve the employment
27 relationship. An individual shall be considered a victim of domestic violence if such
28 individual provides evidence of the entry of a protective order or consent agreement
29 pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 19-3-4, which order is in effect at the time
30 benefits are claimed. When benefits are paid under the provisions of this Code section, the
31 employer's experience rating account shall not be charged; provided, further, that pursuant
32 to Code Section 34-8-159, an employer under Code Section 34-8-158 who has elected to
33 make payments in lieu of contributions is subject to relief of charges under this Code
34 section."

1

SECTION 5.

2 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.