

House Bill 875

By: Representatives Boddie of the 62<sup>nd</sup>, McClain of the 100<sup>th</sup>, Schofield of the 60<sup>th</sup>, Roberts of the 52<sup>nd</sup>, Davis of the 87<sup>th</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 3 of Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to administration of employment security, so as to provide for the appointment,  
3 compensation, and meetings of the Georgia Unemployment Insurance Working Group; to  
4 require the working group to examine this state's unemployment insurance program and  
5 provide its recommendations in the form of a report; to provide for automatic repeal; to  
6 provide for a short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for  
7 other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Unemployment Insurance  
11 Working Group Act."

12 **SECTION 2.**

13 Article 3 of Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
14 administration of employment security, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as  
15 follows:

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16 "34-8-72.1.

17 (a) No later than August 30, 2022, the Commissioner shall appoint a working group to be  
18 known as the Georgia Unemployment Insurance Working Group to review the  
19 unemployment insurance program provided for in this chapter and to make  
20 recommendations in the form of a report.

21 (b) The members of the working group shall include stakeholders representing the interests  
22 of employers and employees. The members of the working group shall serve without  
23 compensation, although each member of the working group shall be reimbursed for actual  
24 expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties from funds available to the  
25 department. Such reimbursement shall be limited to all travel and other expenses  
26 necessarily incurred through service on the working group, in compliance with this state's  
27 travel rules and regulations.

28 (c) The working group shall meet as often as necessary; provided, however, the first  
29 meeting of the working group shall be held no later than September 30, 2022.

30 (d) In developing recommendations for its report, the working group shall examine:

31 (1) Methods of connecting employers and unemployed workers following the pandemic  
32 related to COVID-19;

33 (2) Best practices, policies, and procedures to improve the experience of employers and  
34 unemployed workers with the unemployment insurance program in the event of a future  
35 economic recession, global pandemic, natural disaster, or other such occurrences;

36 (3) Best practices, policies, and procedures to implement in creating a state-wide peer  
37 workforce navigator pilot program to expand opportunities for employment through  
38 reemployment services, education or training opportunities, apprenticeships, and other  
39 models that result in skill development and family-supporting careers for underserved  
40 populations, including, but not limited to individuals:

41 (A) With disabilities, low literacy, or limited English proficiency;

42 (B) Who are inexperienced or untrained;

43 (C) Who have experienced homelessness or may have been out of the workforce for  
44 an extended period; or

45 (D) Who are naturalized citizens.

46 Such examination should take into consideration how labor unions, worker organizations,  
47 and nonprofit community groups could serve as peer workforce navigators for such  
48 individuals;

49 (4) Providing legislative liaisons to the legislative branch to:

50 (A) Assist members of the General Assembly with constituency inquiries from  
51 unemployed workers regarding the unemployment insurance program; and

52 (B) Effectively communicate department policy and administrative updates;

53 (5) Methods to streamline and facilitate applications for unemployment insurance  
54 benefits that will increase access for unemployed workers, simplify reporting  
55 requirements for employers, and improve the process for the submission of partial  
56 unemployment claim forms;

57 (6) Ways to provide and fund assistance to the business community in interacting with  
58 the unemployment insurance program, including, but not limited to employer liaisons,  
59 that will reduce administrative burdens and improve user experience;

60 (7) Any software or technology issues contributing to delays, claims processing issues,  
61 and paperwork burdens to businesses that may be resolved through technological means  
62 or improved claimant or employer user experience and interface with the unemployment  
63 insurance program; and

64 (8) Any legislation needed to improve the unemployment insurance program.

65 (e) No later than July 1, 2023, the working group shall submit its report to the  
66 Commissioner and the members of the House Committee on Industry and Labor and the  
67 Senate Insurance and Labor Committee. The Commissioner shall make the report publicly  
68 available by posting the report on the department's website.

69 (f) This Code section shall stand repealed on January 1, 2024."

70

**SECTION 3.**

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