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Senator Mia Costello
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Senate Bill 159—Unemployment Benefits

Sectional Analysis

Version I

"An Act relating to unemployment benefits."

Sec. 1 – AS 23.20.340(a) Page 1, Lines 3-15, & Page 2, Line 1

Is amended to ensure that evidence of a claim for unemployment benefits from a duplicate, out-of-state, or foreign Internet protocol address is included as evidence when determining whether the claimant is eligible for benefits.

Is amended to direct the Department of Labor & Workforce Development to verify a claimant's identity and coordinate with the Department of Health and Social Services to review information relevant to a claimant's eligibility before making an initial determination of eligibility for unemployment benefits.

Sec. 2 – AS 23.20.340(b) Page 2, Lines 2-16

Is amended by including evidence that the claimant for unemployment benefits submitted the claim from a duplicate, out-of-state, or foreign Internet protocol address becoming available directs the Department of Labor & Workforce Development to reconsider their previous determination and issue a redetermination of eligibility for benefits.

Sec. 3 – AS 23.20.350(e) Page 2, Lines 17-31, & Page 3, Lines 1-12

Is amended to replace the earnings ratio of the individual with the state average unemployment rate when determining the number of weeks that an individual may receive unemployment benefits. Starting at an unemployment rate of up to 5 percent, an individual would receive 14 weeks of unemployment benefits. With each additional half percent increase in the unemployment rate, the number of weeks of benefits available would increase by one, maxing out at 26 weeks.

Sec. 4 – AS 23.20.350(g) Page 3, Lines 13-16

Is amended by including a new paragraph which defines the “state average unemployment rate” as the average seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate for the most recently completed quarter of the calendar year as reported by the Department of Labor & Workforce Development.

Sec. 5 – AS 23.20.350(g)(2) Page 3, Line 17

Is repealed to remove from statute the definition of “earnings ratio” which is currently used by the Department in the determination of benefits. The “earnings ratio” is calculated by dividing the total base period wages of the worker (typically the first four of the previous five quarters) by the wages paid in the quarter in which the worker was paid the most.