

SENATE LABOR COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 309

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 27, 2010

The Senate Labor Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 309.

This bill creates an exception under the current unemployment benefits program to allow the spouse of an active member of the New Jersey National Guard to receive unemployment benefits if the individual left work as the result of an extreme emergency or family hardship which occurred due to the deployment of his or her spouse. The definition of extreme emergency and family hardship is to be determined by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.

Under the bill, employers whose workers receive benefits will not be charged for these benefits, except for governmental or non-profit "reimbursable" employers who make no contributions into the unemployment compensation fund.

When a member of the National Guard is deployed, the member's spouse is sometimes forced to quit his or her job due to an extreme emergency or family hardship. Under current law, the spouse would not qualify for unemployment insurance benefits because the law regards the separation from work as voluntary and without good cause attributable to the work.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2010-2011 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.