2014R1413

1	Senate Bill No. 288
2	(By Senator Carmichael)
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4	[Introduced January 8, 2014; referred to the Committee on Labor;
5	and then to the Committee on the Judiciary.]
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10	A BILL to amend and reenact $\$21A-6-3$ of the Code of West Virginia,
11	1931, as amended, relating to disqualification for
12	unemployment benefits.
13	Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:
14	That be §21A-6-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as
15	amended, be amended and reenacted to read as follows:
16	ARTICLE 6. EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY; BENEFITS.
17	<pre>§21A-6-3. Disqualification for benefits.</pre>
18	Upon the determination of the facts by the commissioner, an
19	individual shall be disqualified for benefits:
20	(1) For the week in which he or she left his or her most
21	recent work voluntarily without good cause involving fault on the
22	part of the employer and until the individual returns to covered
23	employment and has been employed in covered employment at least
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1 thirty working days.

For the purpose of this subdivision, an individual has not 2 3 left his or her most recent work voluntarily without good cause 4 involving fault on the part of the employer, if the individual 5 leaves his or her most recent work with an employer and if he or 6 she in fact, within a fourteen-day calendar period, does return to 7 employment with the last preceding employer with whom he or she was 8 previously employed within the past year prior to his or her return 9 to workday, and which last preceding employer, after having 10 previously employed the individual for thirty working days or more, 11 laid off the individual because of lack of work, which layoff 12 occasioned the payment of benefits under this chapter or could have 13 occasioned the payment of benefits under this chapter had the 14 individual applied for benefits. It is the intent of this 15 paragraph to cause no disgualification for benefits for an 16 individual who complies with the foregoing set of requirements and 17 conditions. Further, for the purpose of this subdivision, an 18 individual has not left his or her most recent work voluntarily 19 without good cause involving fault on the part of the employer, if 20 the individual was compelled to leave his or her work for his or 21 her own health-related reasons and notifies the employer prior to 22 leaving the job or within two business days after leaving the job 23 or as soon as practicable and presents written certification from

1 a licensed physician within thirty days of leaving the job that his 2 or her work aggravated, worsened or will worsen the individual's 3 health problem.

4 (2) For the week in which he or she was discharged from his or 5 her most recent work for misconduct and the six weeks immediately 6 following that week; or for the week in which he or she was 7 discharged from his or her last thirty-day employing unit for 8 misconduct and the six weeks immediately following that week. The 9 disgualification carries a reduction in the maximum benefit amount 10 equal to six times the individual's weekly benefit. However, if 11 the claimant returns to work in covered employment for thirty days 12 during his or her benefit year, whether or not the days are 13 consecutive, the maximum benefit amount is increased by the amount 14 of the decrease imposed under the disqualification; except that: 15 If he or she were discharged from his or her most recent work 16 for one of the following reasons, or if he or she were discharged 17 from his or her last thirty days employing unit for one of the 18 following reasons: Gross misconduct consisting of willful 19 destruction of his or her employer's property; assault upon the 20 person of his or her employer or any employee of his or her 21 employer; if the assault is committed at the individual's place of 22 employment or in the course of employment; reporting to work in an

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23 intoxicated condition, or being intoxicated while at work;

1 reporting to work under the influence of any controlled substance, 2 as defined in chapter sixty-a of this code without a valid 3 prescription, or being under the influence of any controlled 4 substance, as defined in said chapter without a valid prescription, 5 while at work; adulterating or otherwise manipulating a sample or 6 specimen in order to thwart a drug or alcohol test lawfully 7 required of an employee; refusal to submit to random testing for 8 alcohol or illegal controlled substances for employees in safety 9 sensitive positions as defined in section two, article one-d, 10 chapter twenty-one of this code; arson, theft, larceny, fraud or 11 embezzlement in connection with his or her work; or any other gross 12 misconduct, he or she is disqualified for benefits until he or she 13 has thereafter worked for at least thirty days in covered 14 employment: Provided, That for the purpose of this subdivision, 15 the words "any other gross misconduct" includes, but is not limited 16 to, any act or acts of misconduct where the individual has received 17 prior written warning that termination of employment may result 18 from the act or acts.

(3) For the week in which he or she failed without good cause 20 to apply for available, suitable work, accept suitable work when 21 offered, or return to his or her customary self-employment when 22 directed to do so by the commissioner, and for the four weeks which 23 immediately follow for such additional period as any offer of

1 suitable work shall continue open for his or her acceptance. The 2 disqualification carries a reduction in the maximum benefit amount 3 equal to four times the individual's weekly benefit amount.

(4) For a week in which his or her total or partial 4 5 unemployment is due to a stoppage of work which exists because of 6 a labor dispute at the factory, establishment or other premises at 7 which he or she was last employed, unless the commissioner is 8 satisfied that he or she: (1) Was not participating, financing or 9 directly interested in the dispute; and (2) did not belong to a 10 grade or class of workers who were participating, financing or 11 directly interested in the labor dispute which resulted in the 12 stoppage of work. No disgualification under this subdivision is 13 imposed if the employees are required to accept wages, hours or 14 conditions of employment substantially less favorable than those 15 prevailing for similar work in the locality, or if employees are 16 denied the right of collective bargaining under generally 17 prevailing conditions, or if an employer shuts down his or her 18 plant or operation or dismisses his or her employees in order to 19 force wage reduction, changes in hours or working conditions. For 20 the purpose of this subdivision if any stoppage of work continues 21 longer than four weeks after the termination of the labor dispute 22 which caused stoppage of work, there is a rebuttable presumption 23 that part of the stoppage of work which exists after a period of

1 four weeks after the termination of the labor dispute did not exist 2 because of the labor dispute; and in that event the burden is upon 3 the employer or other interested party to show otherwise.

4 (5) For a week with respect to which he or she is receiving or5 has received:

6 (a) Wages in lieu of notice;

7 (b) Compensation for temporary total disability under the 8 workers' compensation law of any state or under a similar law of 9 the United States; or

10 (c) Unemployment compensation benefits under the laws of the 11 United States or any other state.

12 (6) For the week in which an individual has voluntarily quit 13 employment to marry or to perform any marital, parental or family 14 duty, or to attend to his or her personal business or affairs and 15 until the individual returns to covered employment and has been 16 employed in covered employment at least thirty working days: 17 *Provided*, That an individual who has voluntarily quit employment to 18 accompany a spouse serving in active military service who has been 19 reassigned from one military assignment to another is not 20 disqualified for benefits pursuant to this subdivision: *Provided* 21 *however*, That the account of the employer of an individual who 22 leaves the employment to another may not be charged.

1 (7) Benefits may not be paid to any individual on the basis of 2 any services, substantially all of which consist of participating 3 in sports or athletic events or training or preparing to so 4 participate, for any week which commences during the period between 5 two successive sport seasons (or similar periods) if the individual 6 performed the services in the first of the seasons (or similar 7 periods) and there is a reasonable assurance that the individual 8 will perform the services in the later of the seasons (or similar 9 periods).

10 (8) (a) Benefits may not be paid on the basis of services 11 performed by an alien unless the alien is an individual who was 12 lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time the services 13 were performed, was lawfully present for purposes of performing the 14 services or was permanently residing in the United States under 15 color of law at the time the services were performed (including an 16 alien who is lawfully present in the United States as a result of 17 the application of the provisions of Section 203(a) (7) or Section 18 212(d) (5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act): Provided, That 19 any modifications to the provisions of Section 3304(a) (14) of the 20 federal Unemployment Tax Act as provided by Public Law 94-566 which 21 specify other conditions or other effective date than stated in 22 this subdivision for the denial of benefits based on services 23 performed by aliens and which modifications are required to be

1 implemented under state law as a condition for full tax credit 2 against the tax imposed by the federal Unemployment Tax Act are 3 applicable under the provisions of this section.

4 (b) Any data or information required of individuals applying 5 for benefits to determine whether benefits are not payable to them 6 because of their alien status shall be uniformly required from all 7 applicants for benefits.

8 (c) In the case of an individual whose application for 9 benefits would otherwise be approved, no determination that 10 benefits to the individual are not payable because of his or her 11 alien status may be made except upon a preponderance of the 12 evidence.

13 (9) For each week in which an individual is unemployed 14 because, having voluntarily left employment to attend a school, 15 college, university or other educational institution, he or she is 16 attending that school, college, university or other educational 17 institution, or is awaiting entrance thereto or is awaiting the 18 starting of a new term or session thereof, and until the individual 19 returns to covered employment.

20 (10) For each week in which he or she is unemployed because of 21 his or her request, or that of his or her duly authorized agent, 22 for a vacation period at a specified time that would leave the 23 employer no other alternative but to suspend operations.

1 (11) In the case of an individual who accepts an early 2 retirement incentive package, unless he or she: (I) Establishes a 3 well-grounded fear of imminent layoff supported by definitive 4 objective facts involving fault on the part of the employer; and 5 (ii) establishes that he or she would suffer a substantial loss by 6 not accepting the early retirement incentive package.

7 (12) For each week with respect to which he or she is 8 receiving or has received benefits under Title II of the Social 9 Security Act or similar payments under any Act of Congress, or 10 remuneration in the form of an annuity, pension or other retirement 11 pay from a base period employer or chargeable employer or from any 12 trust or fund contributed to by a base period employer or 13 chargeable employer or any combination of the above, the weekly 14 benefit amount payable to the individual for that week shall be 15 reduced (but not below zero) by the prorated weekly amount of those 16 benefits, payments or remuneration: *Provided*, That if the amount 17 of benefits is not a multiple of \$1, it shall be computed to the 18 next lowest multiple of \$1: Provided, however, That there is no 19 disqualification if in the individual's base period there are no 20 wages which were paid by the base period employer or chargeable 21 employer paying the remuneration, or by a fund into which the 22 employer has paid during the base period: Provided further, That 23 notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision to the

1 contrary, the weekly benefit amount payable to the individual for 2 that week may not be reduced by any retirement benefits he or she 3 is receiving or has received under Title II of the Social Security 4 Act or similar payments under any Act of Congress. A claimant may 5 be required to certify as to whether or not he or she is receiving 6 or has been receiving remuneration in the form of an annuity, 7 pension or other retirement pay from a base period employer or 8 chargeable employer or from a trust fund contributed to by a base 9 period employer or chargeable employer.

10 (13) For each week in which and for fifty-two weeks 11 thereafter, beginning with the date of the decision, if the 12 commissioner finds the individual who within twenty-four calendar 13 months immediately preceding the decision, has made a false 14 statement or representation knowing it to be false or knowingly 15 fails to disclose a material fact, to obtain or increase any 16 benefit payment under this article: Provided, or That 17 disgualification under this subdivision does not preclude 18 prosecution under section seven, article ten of this chapter.

19 <u>(14) For any week or portion thereof in which he or she did</u>
20 not work as a result of a strike.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is clarify that an individual

is disqualified from unemployment benefits for any week or portion therefore in which he or she did not work as a result of a strike.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.