

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

Amend the bill in section 1 in subsection 1 by striking out the blocked paragraph (page 1, lines 13 to 17 in L.D.) and inserting the following:

'Each false statement or representation or failure to disclose a material fact ~~shall constitute~~constitutes a separate offense. Unemployment fraud is a ~~Class D~~crime theft by deception under Title 17-A, section 354.'

Amend the bill in section 2 in subsection 2 in the blocked paragraph in the 5th and 6th lines (page 1, lines 33 and 34 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "until the documentation is provided," and inserting the following: 'in accordance with section 1194, subsection 2 for the week or weeks for which no documentation was provided'

Amend the bill in section 4 in subsection 13 in the 3rd line (page 2, line 11 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "commission, the individual participates in those services, unless the commission" and inserting the following: 'Department of Labor, the individual participates in those services, unless the department'

Amend the bill in section 5 in §1192 in the first paragraph in the first line (page 2, line 17 in L.D.) by inserting after the following: "2," the following: '3,'

Amend the bill in section 5 in §1192 in the first paragraph in the 2nd to last line (page 2, line 25 in L.D.) by inserting after the following: "nature" the following: ', including child care emergencies and transportation emergencies'

Amend the bill in section 6 in subsection 2 in the first paragraph in the 2nd to last line (page 2, line 31 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "10" and inserting the following: '8'

Amend the bill in section 6 in subsection 2 in paragraph A in the 2nd to last line (page 2, line 35 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "10" and inserting the following: '8'

Amend the bill in section 7 in subsection 3 in paragraph A in the 2nd line (page 3, line 13 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "6" and inserting the following: '10'

Amend the bill in section 7 in subsection 3 in paragraph A in the blocked paragraph in the first line (page 3, line 19 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "6" and inserting the following: '10'

Amend the bill in section 9 in subsection 6 in the last line (page 4, line 30 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "an indefinite period" and inserting the following: 'a period of time to be determined by the commissioner'

Amend the bill by inserting after section 9 the following:

**‘Sec. 10. Interdepartmental cooperation.** The Department of Labor shall work with the United States Department of Labor to explore allowing alternatives for individuals for whom in-person participation in the first reemployment eligibility assessment session is unduly burdensome based on travel distance and shall adopt standards to implement any allowable and feasible alternatives. If permitted

by the Federal Government, the department shall develop standards and procedures to provide alternatives to in-person participation for all subsequent reemployment eligibility assessment sessions for individuals for whom travel to such sessions would be unduly burdensome. Waiver of in-person participation in services must be made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with standards adopted by the department. If alternatives to in-person participation are allowed and are available, the department shall notify all individuals affected by this section of any standards or procedures providing an alternative to in-person participation in reemployment eligibility assessment services.'

### **SUMMARY**

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, amends the bill to clarify that criminal prosecutions may be brought against both individuals and employers who commit unemployment fraud. It adds child care emergencies and transportation emergencies to the list of good cause exceptions for registering for work, being able and available for work and participating in reemployment services. It changes the amount of earnings an individual must make before qualifying for benefits after being discharged for misconduct from 10 times the weekly benefit amount to 8 times the weekly benefit amount. It changes the number of weeks after which an individual must broaden the individual's work search requirements from 6 weeks to 10 weeks. The amendment also clarifies that the Commissioner of Labor may determine the amount of time a claimant is disqualified from receiving benefits after a 3rd occurrence of statement falsification or misrepresentation. It requires the Department of Labor to explore alternatives to in-person participation in reemployment eligibility assessment sessions if travel is unduly burdensome.

### **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED (See attached)**