

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2375 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY GINGRICH, SEPTEMBER 26, 2016

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND INDUSTRY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2016

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937  
 2 P.L.2897, No.1), entitled "An act establishing a system of  
 3 unemployment compensation to be administered by the  
 4 Department of Labor and Industry and its existing and newly  
 5 created agencies with personnel (with certain exceptions)  
 6 selected on a civil service basis; requiring employers to  
 7 keep records and make reports, and certain employers to pay  
 8 contributions based on payrolls to provide moneys for the  
 9 payment of compensation to certain unemployed persons;  
 10 providing procedure and administrative details for the  
 11 determination, payment and collection of such contributions  
 12 and the payment of such compensation; providing for  
 13 cooperation with the Federal Government and its agencies;  
 14 creating certain special funds in the custody of the State  
 15 Treasurer; and prescribing penalties," in contributions by  
 16 employers and employees, further providing for contributions  
 17 by employees and for Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
 18 Fund.

19 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
 20 hereby enacts as follows:

21 Section 1. Sections 301.4(e)(2) and 301.9 of the act of  
 22 December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937 P.L.2897, No.1), known as  
 23 the Unemployment Compensation Law, amended or added July 2, 2013  
 24 (P.L.195, No.34), are amended to read:

25 Section 301.4. Contributions by Employes.--\* \* \*  
 26 (e) Contributions paid under this section shall be allocated

1 by the department among the Unemployment Compensation Fund, the  
2 Reemployment Fund and the Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
3 Fund as follows:

4 \* \* \*

5 (2) During each calendar year from 2013 through [2016] 2017,  
6 an amount determined by the secretary with the approval of the  
7 Governor shall be deposited into the Service and Infrastructure  
8 Improvement Fund. For calendar year 2013, the amount determined  
9 under this clause may not exceed forty million dollars  
10 (\$40,000,000). For calendar year 2014, the amount determined  
11 under this clause may not exceed thirty million dollars  
12 (\$30,000,000). For calendar years 2015 and 2016, the amount  
13 determined under this clause for each calendar year may not  
14 exceed one hundred ninety million dollars (\$190,000,000)  
15 adjusted by the increase in the Bureau of Labor Statistics  
16 Consumer Price Index for the period from May 2013 through  
17 January of the calendar year less the amount of Federal  
18 administrative funding for the preceding Federal fiscal year.  
19 For calendar year 2017, the amount determined under this clause  
20 may not exceed forty-two million eight hundred thousand dollars  
21 (\$42,800,000).

22 \* \* \*

23 Section 301.9. Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
24 Fund.--(a) There is established a restricted account in the  
25 State Treasury to be known as the Service and Infrastructure  
26 Improvement Fund.

27 (b) Moneys in the Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
28 Fund shall consist of contributions deposited into the fund  
29 pursuant to section 301.4(e)(2).

30 (c) Moneys in the Service and Infrastructure Improvement

1 Fund are appropriated on a continuing basis, upon approval of  
2 the Governor, to the department to be prioritized for the  
3 following purposes:

4 (1) To improve the quality, efficiency and timeliness of  
5 services provided by the service center system to individuals  
6 claiming compensation under this act, including claim filing,  
7 claim administration, adjudication services and staffing and  
8 training of system employees.

9 (2) Expenditures for information management technology,  
10 communications technology and other infrastructure components  
11 that the secretary determines are likely to result in  
12 significant and lasting improvements to the unemployment  
13 compensation system.

14 (3) To pay the costs of collecting the contributions  
15 deposited into the Service and Infrastructure Improvement Fund  
16 pursuant to section 301.4(e)(2).

17 (4) To reimburse the Auditor General for the audit required  
18 by subsection (h).

19 (d) Consistent with the merit staffing requirement of  
20 section 303(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (49 Stat. 620, 42  
21 U.S.C. § 503(a)(1)), no moneys in the Service and Infrastructure  
22 Improvement Fund may be expended or obligated to a third party  
23 to perform unemployment compensation services of the department,  
24 except services relating to technology and infrastructure  
25 components deemed necessary by the secretary under subsection  
26 (c)(2).

27 (e) Any moneys in the Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
28 Fund that are not expended or obligated as of December 31,  
29 [2018] 2019, shall be transferred to the Unemployment  
30 Compensation Fund under section 601.

1 (f) Moneys in the Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
2 Fund shall not lapse at any time nor be transferred to any other  
3 fund except as provided in subsection (e).

4 (g) No later than June 30 of each calendar year from 2014  
5 through [2019] 2020, the department shall provide a report to  
6 the Governor and the General Assembly, through the Secretary-  
7 Parliamentarian of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House  
8 of Representatives, regarding the Service and Infrastructure  
9 Improvement Fund, which report shall include an accounting for  
10 the contributions deposited into the fund, the expenditures and  
11 transfers from the fund during the prior year and a description  
12 of the purposes for which expenditures from the fund were made  
13 in the prior year.

14 (h) The Auditor General shall conduct an audit of the  
15 Service and Infrastructure Improvement Fund and provide a report  
16 to the chairperson of the Labor and Industry Committee of the  
17 Senate and the chairperson of the Labor and Industry Committee  
18 of the House of Representatives no later than June 30, 2017. The  
19 department shall cooperate fully with the Auditor General and  
20 provide timely responses to requests for information or comment.  
21 The department shall reimburse the Auditor General for the cost  
22 of the audit from the Service and Infrastructure Improvement  
23 Fund in an amount not to exceed three hundred thousand dollars  
24 (\$300,000). The report required under this subsection shall  
25 include:

26 (1) A description and accounting of expenditures made from  
27 the Service and Infrastructure Improvement Fund for each  
28 calendar year, including 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

29 (2) An evaluation of whether all funds were expended for the  
30 purposes authorized by this section.

1 (3) An evaluation of the improvements and efficiencies  
2 achieved as the result of expenditures for information  
3 management technology, communications technology and other  
4 infrastructure components.

5 (4) An estimate of the impacts to the unemployment  
6 compensation system that are likely to occur if additional  
7 funding for the Service and Infrastructure Improvement Fund is  
8 not authorized by the General Assembly for calendar years after  
9 2017.

10 (5) Recommendations on how the department can increase the  
11 efficiency of the unemployment compensation system.

12 (6) Estimates of the amount of State funding that will be  
13 necessary to operate the unemployment compensation system, if  
14 the system is being operated in a reasonably efficient manner.

15 (7) Any other relevant information or recommendations, as  
16 determined by the Auditor General.

17 (i) It is the intention of the General Assembly that funds  
18 provided for the Service and Infrastructure Improvement Fund in  
19 calendar year 2017 be utilized for the purpose of maintaining  
20 the current service and infrastructure levels of the  
21 unemployment compensation system, and that the General Assembly  
22 would separately consider a funding request for the purpose of  
23 making technological upgrades to the delivery system for  
24 unemployment compensation benefits. Before February 15, 2017,  
25 the department shall submit a funding request for technological  
26 upgrades to the delivery system for unemployment compensation  
27 benefits to the chairperson of the Labor and Industry Committee  
28 of the Senate and the chairperson of the Labor and Industry  
29 Committee of the House of Representatives. The request shall  
30 include:

1     (1) A detailed description of the project.

2     (2) An explanation of the improvements to the benefit  
3 delivery system that will result from the project.

4     (3) The total estimated cost of implementing the project.

5     (4) The amount of time in years that will be necessary to  
6 implement the project, and the cost of implementing the project  
7 for each year.

8     (5) An estimate of the cost savings that will result from  
9 implementing the project.

10    (6) Information on any proposal received or contract  
11 executed for technological upgrades to the delivery system for  
12 unemployment compensation benefits, if the information is  
13 available to the public under the act of February 14, 2008  
14 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law.

15    Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.