



SB 9 Is Costly and Would Delay or Deny Unemployment Compensation to Eligible Citizens

Senate Bill 9 would require all Pennsylvanians who are applying for many public benefits, including unemployment compensation (UC), to provide government-issued ID and to sign an affidavit attesting to their U.S. citizenship or lawful immigration status. Although the bill is intended to prevent undocumented immigrants from getting benefits, its primary effects would be to delay and disqualify UC benefits to citizens struggling to meet the documentation requirements. SB 9 would also place huge new staffing and cost burdens on a UC system that is already struggling to keep up with demand.

- **New red tape required by SB 9 would delay Unemployment Compensation (UC) claims for everyone and cause some citizens to lose UC they are entitled to.**
- **The Unemployment Compensation (UC) system is not set up to review documents.** All UC applications happen on the phone or online. There are no in-person UC Service Centers where individuals can present ID and affidavits.
 - **Most UC applicants submit no paperwork** at all.
 - **Over 1 million Pennsylvanians filed initial claims for unemployment in 2015.** The UC system does not have the capacity to accept faxed or IDs and affidavits for all of these people.
 - Many UC claimants—especially those in rural areas—cannot easily get to a fax machine to submit copies of their ID and signed affidavits.
- **The Governor’s Budget Office estimated that SB 9 would cost the state \$36.5 million in administrative funding. \$21 million of that cost is directly related to Unemployment. Act 34 of 2013, which was implemented to counter crippling administrative funding cuts to the UC program, only added \$10 million a year in additional administrative funding.**
- **Workers already provide identification at the time of hiring, verifying their eligibility to receive benefits.** SB9 is duplicative and a meaningless waste of resources.
- **There is no evidence of any ineligible immigrants receiving Unemployment Compensation to which they are not entitled.**
- **Delays could violate federal law and could lead to lawsuits.** California experienced exactly that when it started requiring new paperwork verifying identity.

For more information, contact Michael Hollander at 215.981.3794 or mhollander@clsphila.org. (6/10/2016)