

A-Engrossed
House Bill 2624

Ordered by the House May 4
Including House Amendments dated May 4

Sponsored by Representative WITT; Representatives BAILEY, BARKER, BARNHART, BOONE, CLEM, DEMBROW, C EDWARDS, D EDWARDS, GARRETT, GELSER, GREENLICK, HOLVEY, KAHL, MATTHEWS, NATHANSON, RILEY, SCHAUFLE, SHIELDS, STIEGLER, THATCHER, VANORMAN, Senators BONAMICI, BURDICK, DEVLIN, DINGFELDER, HASS, JOHNSON, METSGER, MONNES ANDERSON, MONROE, PROZANSKI, ROSENBAUM, SCHRADER, WALKER

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

Defines "economically distressed worker training" and "eligible economically distressed workers" for purposes of unemployment insurance benefits. **Provides that eligible economically distressed workers enrolled or participating in or approved for economically distressed worker training may not be denied benefits under specified circumstances. Provides that base year employer's account may not be charged for benefits for economically distressed worker training paid pursuant to Act.**

Requires Director of Employment Department to adopt rules for administration of Act. Requires director to submit report to Legislative Assembly on or before March 1, 2011.

Sunsets January 2, 2012.

Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to training for unemployment insurance claimants; creating new provisions; repealing ORS
3 657.337 and 657.342; and prescribing an effective date.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1. Sections 2 to 5 of this 2009 Act are added to and made a part of ORS chapter**
6 **657.**

7 **SECTION 2. As used in sections 2 to 5 of this 2009 Act:**

8 (1)(a) "Economically distressed worker training" means:

9 (A) Training and education that provides occupation-specific skills required in high-
10 demand occupations, as determined by the Director of the Employment Department; or

11 (B) Retraining and basic education, including literacy skills, designed to prepare an indi-
12 vidual, within a reasonable period not to exceed two years, for gainful employment or self-
13 employment that is likely to become full-time employment that pays at least 110 percent of
14 the minimum wage established under ORS 653.025.

15 (b) "Economically distressed worker training" does not include programs of instruction
16 that are primarily intended to lead to a baccalaureate or higher degree or training that
17 prepares individuals for employment in occupations that require a baccalaureate or higher
18 degree, unless approved by the director.

19 (2) "Eligible economically distressed workers" means individuals who:

20 (a) Are unemployed as described in ORS 657.100;

21 (b) Are eligible for benefits under ORS 657.150, unless otherwise disqualified under this

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 chapter;

2 (c) Are not disqualified from benefits under any provision of ORS 657.176; and

3 (d) Have been employed in work paying less than 110 percent of the minimum wage es-
4 tablished under ORS 653.025 during their entire base year.

5 **SECTION 3.** (1)(a) Eligible economically distressed workers enrolled or participating in
6 economically distressed worker training may not be denied unemployment insurance benefits
7 solely because they are attending training.

8 (b) Eligible economically distressed workers approved for economically distressed worker
9 training may not be denied unemployment insurance benefits for refusing to accept work if
10 the work offered:

11 (A) Is part-time or temporary or interferes with the eligible economically distressed
12 worker's training schedule; and

13 (B) Pays less than 110 percent of the minimum wage established under ORS 653.025.

14 (2) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter relating to availability for work or ac-
15 tively seeking work, eligible economically distressed workers who are enrolled or participat-
16 ing in economically distressed worker training and who are otherwise eligible for
17 unemployment insurance benefits are not ineligible for benefits or waiting week credit be-
18 cause of attendance in the training.

19 **SECTION 4.** The Director of the Employment Department, in consultation with the De-
20 partment of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, shall adopt rules necessary
21 for the administration of sections 2 and 3 of this 2009 Act, including, but not limited to,
22 procedures for approval, periodic review for continued approval, or disapproval of econom-
23 ically distressed worker training for eligible economically distressed workers. The director
24 shall ensure that all programs for eligible economically distressed workers provide integrated
25 and appropriate training and education.

26 **SECTION 5.** A base year employer's account may not be charged for benefits for eco-
27 nomically distressed worker training paid under sections 2 and 3 of this 2009 Act. However,
28 nothing in this section may be construed to relieve the state, reimbursing political subdivi-
29 sions, reimbursing nonprofit employers or reimbursing Indian tribes from paying into the
30 Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund an amount equal to the benefits for economically
31 distressed worker training paid under sections 2 and 3 of this 2009 Act.

32 **SECTION 6.** Sections 2 and 3 of this 2009 Act apply to claims for benefits filed on or after
33 the effective date of this 2009 Act.

34 **SECTION 7.** No later than March 1, 2011, the Director of the Employment Department
35 shall submit to the Legislative Assembly a report on the operation of economically distressed
36 worker training through January 31, 2011.

37 **SECTION 8.** ORS 657.337 and 657.342 are repealed.

38 **SECTION 9.** Sections 1 to 6 of this 2009 Act are repealed on January 2, 2012.

39 **SECTION 10.** This 2009 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the date on which the
40 regular session of the Seventy-fifth Legislative Assembly adjourns sine die.

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