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Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance and Technology Committee
Senate Bill 51 — Sponsor Testimony
Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman Lang, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance and Technology Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 51.

Senate Bill 51 will provide legislative oversight of executive action on unplanned loans or grants of federal voluntary unemployment compensation benefits.

Simply put, if the federal government comes to Ohio offering major changes to unemployment benefits again, the legislature will have to give its approval before any administration can accept the benefits.

This legislative body is always in pursuit of stronger cooperation with the executive and Ohio's various government agencies, and part of that is remaining a proactive participant in the oversight of unemployment benefits.

The People of Ohio are best served when their elected officials are doing their due diligence.

Even though the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) has ended, it is clear that it damaged the economy by encouraging people not to go back to work as evidenced by businesses across the state begging for employees, restricting hours and even closing.

While the program had good intentions and can be argued that it helped maintain families and restore economic confidence in an immediate crisis, it backfired on our businesses and economy.

During the pandemic, we received feedback from our constituents on a daily basis, including the small businesses in our districts that struggled for months to hire, or even re-hire, workers and fully reopen their doors.

I have even personally seen how employers offered bonuses for those who simply come for an interview.

One poll even showed that 1.8 million American adults responded that they received enough money to survive comfortably from unemployment insurance without having to work. (Morning Consult, July, 2021)

To clarify where we are today, Governor DeWine ended the extra \$300 weekly federal unemployment payments in June 2021, and new PUA applications ended on September 4, 2021.

This bill is not antagonistic toward any administration, and I hope the governor agrees that this is a proper exercise of oversight.

In fact, I am in full agreement with his actions to reject further voluntary federal unemployment benefits.

Therefore, the value of this legislation is in getting Ohioans back to work and protecting our economy in the future.

Thank you once again Chairman Wilson and members of the committee for the opportunity to present this legislation to you today. I will be glad to answer any questions at this time.