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FLOOR DEBATE

March 16, 2005 LB 739

provides that in any year, commencing in 2006, that the state's reserve ratio as of September 30, if it falls below .4 percent, the maximum weekly benefit amount for the following calendar year shall not be increased. Section 6 is the section that establishes the maximum table wage base. Currently, the taxable wage base is at \$7,000. In 2006 it will go to \$8,000, and in 2007 it will go to \$9,000. And I'm going to skip over Section 7. We're going to go to Section 8. For benefit years prior to September 30, 2006, a person will be paid equal to the full weekly benefit amount if wages are payable to each such week equal to one-half his or her weekly benefit amount or less. If a person makes over one-half of the benefit amount, but less than the full weekly benefit amount, he or she shall be paid an amount equal to one-half of the benefit amount. On or after October 1, 2006, a person paid a benefit...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Yeah.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: ...amount equal to his or her full weekly...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Cunningham, you're now officially on opening on the committee amendments.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. On or after October 1, 2006, a person is paid a benefit equal to his or her full weekly benefit amount if there are wages payable or has wages payable to him or her equal to one-fourth such benefit amount or less. If a person has wages payable to him or her greater than one-fourth of the benefit amount, the person is paid an amount equal to the individual's weekly benefit amount, less the part of the wages payable in excess of one-fourth the individual's weekly benefit amount. Section 9 is a new section. It amends 48-627 to increase the minimum earnings capacity needed to qualify for unemployment benefits from \$1,600 to \$2,500, and you have to earn at least \$800 in at least two quarters of the previous base period. That's effective January 1, 2006. In January 1, 2007, and each year thereafter, there's a minimum earnings test will be adjusted to reflect the changes in the Consumer Price Index. It also requires that in order to file consecutive claims, an individual must earn six