

## Some facts on Unemployment Benefits in Pennsylvania

- The average unemployment check in PA is \$314/week.
- The poverty level for a family of 3 is \$352/week.
- Unemployment compensation provides only about half of a workers prior income.
- PA has one of the lowest taxable wage bases for unemployment benefits in the nation and that wage base **has not been increased since 1984**.
- PA employers pay UC taxes on only the first \$8,000 of wages. If the taxable wage base had increased as much as wages since 1984 it would now be over \$20,000.
- Nationally the average wage base for UC taxes covers the first \$12,200 of the workers pay and 39 states have a higher taxable wage base than PA.
- State UC taxes cost an employer only \$.15 per hour, out of the average state hourly compensation of \$21.36.
- Due to the recession and the frozen wage base Pennsylvania's unemployment trust fund is in debt to the federal government by \$3.6 billion.
- Unemployment in PA has been over 8% for the past 21 months and 523,000 Pennsylvanians are currently unemployed or 8.2% of the population.
- Philadelphia has had unemployment above 10% for the past 20 months with 67,200 currently listed as officially unemployed, or 10.3% of the population.
- Workers currently qualify for 93 weeks of benefits, which will be cut to 73 weeks in July unless the state enacts a technical change to maintain the full Extended Benefits program.
- Extended benefits are totally paid by the federal government.