A bill to be entitled

An act relating to unemployment compensation; amending s. 443.036, F.S.; updating and revising definitions; amending s. 443.101, F.S., relating to disqualification for benefits; revising the definition of the term "good cause"; amending ss. 443.1216 and 443.131, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2), subsections (5), (11), and (14), paragraph (b) of subsection (15), and subsections (18), (20), (21), (23), (25), (27), (35), (39), (40), (46), and (47) of section 443.036, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

443.036 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

- (2) "Agricultural labor" means any remunerated service performed:
- (c) In connection with the production or harvesting of any commodity defined as an agricultural commodity as defined in s. 15(f) in s. 15(g) of the Agricultural Marketing Act, as amended, (46 Stat. 1550, s. 3; 12 U.S.C. s. 1141j); the ginning of cotton; or the operation or maintenance of ditches, canals, reservoirs, or waterways, not owned or operated for profit, used exclusively for supplying and storing water for farming purposes.
 - (5) "American vessel" means \underline{a} any vessel documented or

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numbered under the laws of the United States. The term includes a any vessel that is not neither documented or numbered under the laws of the United States or a, nor documented under the laws of any foreign country, if its crew is employed solely by one or more citizens or residents of the United States or corporations organized under the laws of the United States or of any state.

- "Casual labor" means labor that is occasional, incidental, or irregular, not exceeding 200 person-hours in total duration. As used in this subsection, the term "duration" means the period of time from the commencement to the completion of the particular job or project. Services performed by an employee for an his or her employer during a period of 1 calendar month or any 2 consecutive calendar months, however, are deemed to be casual labor only if the service is performed on 10 or fewer calendar days, regardless of whether those days are consecutive. If any of the services performed by an individual on a particular labor project are not casual labor, each of the services performed by the individual on that job or project may not be deemed casual labor. Services must constitute casual labor and may not be performed in the course of the employer's trade or business in order for those services to be exempt under this section.
- (14) "Contribution" means a payment of payroll tax to the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund which is required under this chapter to finance reemployment assistance benefits.
 - (15) "Crew leader" means an individual who:
 - (b) Pays, either on his or her own behalf or on behalf of

the other person, the individuals furnished by him or her for the service in agricultural labor performed by those individuals.

- (18) "Employee leasing company" means an employing unit that has a valid and active license under chapter 468, and that maintains the records required by s. 443.171(5), and produces, in addition, is responsible for producing quarterly reports concerning the clients and the internal staff of the employee leasing company and the internal staff of the employee leasing company. As used in this subsection, the term "client" means a party who has contracted with an employee leasing company that provides to provide a worker, or workers, to perform services for the client. Leased employees include employees subsequently placed on the payroll of the employee leasing company on behalf of the client. An employee leasing company must notify the tax collection service provider within 30 days after the initiation or termination of the company's relationship with any client company under chapter 468.
- (20) "Employing unit" means an individual; an or type of organization, including a partnership, limited liability company, association, trust, estate, joint-stock company, insurance company, or corporation, whether domestic or foreign; the receiver, trustee in bankruptcy, trustee, or successor of any of the foregoing; or the legal representative of a deceased person, who which has or had in his or her its employ one or more individuals performing services for it within this state.
- (a) Each individual employed to perform or to assist in performing the work of any agent or employee of an employing

unit is deemed to be employed by the employing unit for the purposes of this chapter, regardless of whether the individual was hired or paid directly by the employing unit or by an agent or employee of the employing unit, if the employing unit had actual or constructive knowledge of the work.

- (b) Each individual performing services in this state for an employing unit maintaining at least two separate establishments in this state is deemed to be performing services for a single employing unit for the purposes of this chapter.
- (c) A person who is an officer of a corporation, or a member of a limited liability company classified as a corporation for federal income tax purposes, and who performs services for the corporation or limited liability company in this state, regardless of whether those services are continuous, is deemed an employee of the corporation or the limited liability company during all of each week of his or her tenure of office, regardless of whether he or she is compensated for those services. Services are presumed to be rendered for the corporation if in cases in which the officer is compensated by means other than dividends upon shares of stock of the corporation owned by him or her.
- (d) A limited liability company shall be treated as having the same status as it is classified for federal income tax purposes. However, a single-member limited liability company shall be treated as the employer.
- (21) "Employment" means a service subject to this chapter under s. 443.1216 which is performed by an employee for his or her employer the person employing him or her.

(23) "Fund" means the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund created under this chapter, into which all contributions and reimbursements required under this chapter are deposited and from which all benefits provided under this chapter are paid.

- (25) "Hospital" means an <u>establishment</u> institution that is licensed as a hospital under chapter 395, certified, or approved by the Agency for Health Care Administration as a hospital.
- (27) "Institution of higher education" means an educational institution that:

- (a) Admits as regular students only individuals having a certificate of graduation from a high school, or the recognized equivalent of a certificate of graduation;
- (b) Is legally authorized in this state to provide a program of education beyond high school;
- (c) Provides an educational program that for which it awards a bachelor's or higher degree, or provides a program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's or higher degree; a program of postgraduate or postdoctoral studies; or a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation; and
 - (d) Is a public or other nonprofit institution.

The term includes each community college and state university in this state, and <u>any each other</u> institution in this state authorized under s. 1005.03 to use the designation "college" or "university—" under s. 1005.03.

(35) "Pay period" means a period of 31 or fewer consecutive days for which a payment or remuneration is

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ordinarily made to the employee by the person employing him or her.

- (39) "Reimbursement" means a payment of money to the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund in lieu of a contribution which is required under this chapter to finance reemployment assistance benefits.
- (40) "Reimbursing employer" means an employer who is liable for reimbursements in lieu of contributions $\underline{\text{made}}$ under this chapter.
- (46) "Wages" means remuneration subject to this chapter under s. 443.1217.
- (47) "Week" means a period of 7 consecutive days as defined in the rules of the Department of Economic Opportunity. The department may by rule prescribe that a week is deemed to be "in," "within," or "during" the benefit year that contains the greater part of the week.
- Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 443.101, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 443.101 Disqualification for benefits.—An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:
- (1) (a) For the week in which he or she has voluntarily left work without good cause attributable to his or her employing unit or has been discharged by the employing unit for misconduct connected with his or her work, based on a finding by the Department of Economic Opportunity. As used in this paragraph, the term "work" means any work, whether full-time, part-time, or temporary.
 - 1. Disqualification for voluntarily quitting continues for

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the full period of unemployment next ensuing after the individual has left his or her full-time, part-time, or temporary work voluntarily without good cause and until the individual has earned income equal to or greater than 17 times his or her weekly benefit amount. As used in this subsection, the term "good cause" includes only that cause attributable to the employing unit which would compel a reasonable employee to cease working or attributable to the individual's illness or disability requiring separation from his or her work. Any other disqualification may not be imposed. An individual is not disqualified under this subsection for voluntarily leaving temporary work to return immediately when called to work by the permanent employing unit that temporarily terminated his or her work within the previous 6 calendar months, or for voluntarily leaving work to relocate as a result of his or her militaryconnected spouse's permanent change of station orders, activation orders, or unit deployment orders.

- 2. Disqualification for being discharged for misconduct connected with his or her work continues for the full period of unemployment next ensuing after having been discharged and until the individual is reemployed and has earned income of at least 17 times his or her weekly benefit amount and for not more than 52 weeks immediately following that week, as determined by the department in each case according to the circumstances or the seriousness of the misconduct, under the department's rules for determining adopted for determinations of disqualification for benefits for misconduct.
 - 3. If an individual has provided notification to the

employing unit of his or her intent to voluntarily leave work and the employing unit discharges the individual for reasons other than misconduct before the date the voluntary quit was to take effect, the individual, if otherwise entitled, shall receive benefits from the date of the employer's discharge until the effective date of his or her voluntary quit.

- 4. If an individual is notified by the employing unit of the employer's intent to discharge the individual for reasons other than misconduct and the individual quits without good cause before the date the discharge was to take effect, the claimant is ineligible for benefits pursuant to s. 443.091(1)(d) for failing to be available for work for the week or weeks of unemployment occurring before the effective date of the discharge.
 - 5. As used in this paragraph, the term "good cause" means:
- a. Cause attributable to the employing unit or an illness or disability that requires separation from work; or
- b. Domestic violence, as defined in s. 741.28, which causes the individual to reasonably believe that continued employment will jeopardize the individual's safety or the safety of a member of her or his immediate family. Such cause must be substantiated by evidence that reasonably proves that domestic violence has occurred, such as an injunction, protective order, or other such reasonable and confidential documentation authorized by state law.
- Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1), subsection (2), and paragraph (f) of subsection (13) of section 443.1216, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

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443.1216 Employment.—Employment, as defined in s. 443.036, is subject to this chapter under the following conditions:

- (1) (a) The employment subject to this chapter includes a service performed, including a service performed in interstate commerce, by:
 - 1. An officer of a corporation.

- 2. An individual who, under the usual common-law rules applicable for in determining the employer-employee relationship, is an employee. However, if whenever a client who as defined in s. 443.036(18), which would otherwise be designated as an employing unit has contracted with an employee leasing company to supply it with workers, those workers are considered employees of the employee leasing company. An employee leasing company may lease corporate officers of the client to the client and other workers to the client, except as prohibited by regulations of the Internal Revenue Service. Employees of an employee leasing company must be reported under the employee leasing company's tax identification number and contribution rate for work performed for the employee leasing company.
- a. However, except for the internal employees of an employee leasing company, each employee leasing company may make a separate one-time election to report and pay contributions under the tax identification number and contribution rate for each client of the employee leasing company. Under the client method, an employee leasing company choosing this option must assign leased employees to the client company that is leasing the employees. The client method is solely a method to report

and pay unemployment contributions, and, whichever method is chosen, such election may not impact any other aspect of state law. An employee leasing company that elects the client method must pay contributions at the rates assigned to each client company.

- (I) The election applies to all of the employee leasing company's current and future clients.
- (II) The employee leasing company must notify the Department of Revenue of its election by July 1, 2012, and such election applies to reports and contributions for the first quarter of the following calendar year. The notification must include:
- (A) A list of each client company and the unemployment account number or, if one has not yet been issued, the federal employment identification number, as established by the employee leasing company upon the election to file by client method;
- (B) A list of each client company's current and previous employees and their respective social security numbers for the prior 3 state fiscal years or, if the client company has not been a client for the prior 3 state fiscal years, such portion of the prior 3 state fiscal years that the client company has been a client must be supplied;
- (C) The wage data and benefit charges associated with each client company for the prior 3 state fiscal years or, if the client company has not been a client for the prior 3 state fiscal years, such portion of the prior 3 state fiscal years that the client company has been a client must be supplied. If the client company's employment record is chargeable with

benefits for less than 8 calendar quarters while being a client of the employee leasing company, the client company must pay contributions at the initial rate of 2.7 percent; and

- (D) The wage data and benefit charges for the prior 3 state fiscal years that cannot be associated with a client company must be reported and charged to the employee leasing company.
- (III) Subsequent to choosing the client method, the employee leasing company may not change its reporting method.
- (IV) The employee leasing company shall file a Florida Department of Revenue Employer's Quarterly Report for each client company by approved electronic means, and pay all contributions by approved electronic means.
- (V) For the purposes of calculating experience rates when the client method is chosen, each client's own benefit charges and wage data experience while with the employee leasing company determines each client's tax rate where the client has been a client of the employee leasing company for at least 8 calendar quarters before the election. The client company shall continue to report the nonleased employees under its tax rate.
- (VI) The election is binding on each client of the employee leasing company for as long as a written agreement is in effect between the client and the employee leasing company pursuant to s. 468.525(3)(a). If the relationship between the employee leasing company and the client terminates, the client retains the wage and benefit history experienced under the employee leasing company.
 - (VII) Notwithstanding which election method the employee

leasing company chooses, the applicable client company is an employing unit for purposes of s. 443.071. The employee leasing company or any of its officers or agents are liable for any violation of s. 443.071 engaged in by such persons or entities. The applicable client company or any of its officers or agents are liable for any violation of s. 443.071 engaged in by such persons or entities. The employee leasing company or its applicable client company is not liable for any violation of s. 443.071 engaged in by the other party or by the other party's officers or agents.

- (VIII) If an employee leasing company fails to select the client method of reporting not later than July 1, 2012, the entity is required to report under the employee leasing company's tax identification number and contribution rate.
- (IX) After an employee leasing company is licensed pursuant to part XI of chapter 468, each newly licensed entity has 30 days after the date the license is granted to notify the tax collection service provider in writing of their selection of the client method. A newly licensed employee leasing company that fails to timely select reporting pursuant to the client method of reporting must report under the employee leasing company's tax identification number and contribution rate.
- (X) Irrespective of the election, each transfer of trade or business, including workforce, or a portion thereof, between employee leasing companies is subject to the provisions of s. 443.131(3)(g) if, at the time of the transfer, there is common ownership, management, or control between the entities.
 - b. In addition to any other report required to be filed by

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law, an employee leasing company shall submit a report to the Labor Market Statistics Center within the Department of Economic Opportunity which includes each client establishment and each establishment of the leasing company, or as otherwise directed by the department. The report must include the following information for each establishment:

(I) The trade or establishment name;

- (II) The former reemployment assistance account number, if available;
- (III) The former federal employer's identification number, if available;
- (IV) The industry code recognized and published by the United States Office of Management and Budget, if available;
- (V) A description of the client's primary business activity in order to verify or assign an industry code;
 - (VI) The address of the physical location;
- (VII) The number of full-time and part-time employees who worked during, or received pay that was subject to reemployment assistance taxes for, the pay period including the 12th of the month for each month of the quarter;
- (VIII) The total wages subject to reemployment assistance taxes paid during the calendar quarter;
- (IX) An internal identification code to uniquely identify each establishment of each client;
- (X) The month and year that the client entered into the contract for services; and
- (XI) The month and year that the client terminated the contract for services.

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The report must be submitted electronically or in a manner otherwise prescribed by the Department of Economic Opportunity in the format specified by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor for its Multiple Worksite Report for Professional Employer Organizations. The report must be provided quarterly to the Labor Market Statistics Center within the department, or as otherwise directed by the department, and must be filed by the last day of the month immediately after the end of the calendar quarter. The information required in sub-sub-subparagraphs b.(X) and (XI) need be provided only in the quarter in which the contract to which it relates was entered into or terminated. The sum of the employment data and the sum of the wage data in this report must match the employment and wages reported in the reemployment assistance quarterly tax and wage report. A report is not required for any calendar quarter preceding the third calendar quarter of 2010.

- d. The department shall adopt rules as necessary to administer this subparagraph, and may administer, collect, enforce, and waive the penalty imposed by s. 443.141(1)(b) for the report required by this subparagraph.
- e. For the purposes of this subparagraph, the term "establishment" means any location where business is conducted or where services or industrial operations are performed.
- 3. An individual other than an individual who is an employee under subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2., who performs services for remuneration for any person:
 - a. As an agent-driver or commission-driver engaged in

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distributing meat products, vegetable products, fruit products, bakery products, beverages other than milk, or laundry or drycleaning services for his or her principal.

- b. As a traveling or city salesperson engaged on a full-time basis in the solicitation on behalf of, and the transmission to, his or her principal of orders from wholesalers, retailers, contractors, or operators of hotels, restaurants, or other similar establishments for merchandise for resale or supplies for use in the business operations. This subsubparagraph does not apply to an agent-driver or a commission-driver, or and does not apply to sideline sales activities performed on behalf of a person other than the salesperson's principal.
- 4. The services described in subparagraph 3. are employment subject to this chapter only if:
- a. The contract of service contemplates that substantially all of the services are to be performed personally by the individual;
- b. The individual does not have a substantial investment in facilities used in connection with the services, other than facilities used for transportation; and
- c. The services are not in the nature of a single transaction that is not part of a continuing relationship with the person for whom the services are performed.
- (2) The employment subject to this chapter includes service performed in the employ of a public employer as defined in s. 443.036, if the service is excluded from the definition of "employment" in s. 3306(c)(7) of the Federal Unemployment Tax

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Act and is not excluded from the employment subject to this chapter under subsection (4).

- (13) The following are exempt from coverage under this chapter:
- (f) Service performed in the employ of a public employer as defined in s. 443.036, except as provided in subsection (2), and service performed in the employ of an instrumentality of a public employer as described in s.443.036(36)(b) or (c), to the extent that the instrumentality is immune under the United States Constitution from the tax imposed by s. 3301 of the Internal Revenue Code for that service.
- Section 4. Paragraph (f) of subsection (3) of section 443.131, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 - 443.131 Contributions.

- (3) VARIATION OF CONTRIBUTION RATES BASED ON BENEFIT EXPERIENCE.—
 - (f) Transfer of employment records.-
- 1. For the purposes of this subsection, two or more employers who are parties to a transfer of business or the subject of a merger, consolidation, or other form of reorganization, effecting a change in legal identity or form, are deemed a single employer and are considered to be one employer with a continuous employment record if the tax collection service provider finds that the successor employer continues to carry on the employing enterprises of all of the predecessor employers, and that the successor employer has paid all contributions required of and due from all of the predecessor employers, and has assumed liability for all

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contributions that may become due from all of the predecessor employers. In addition, An employer may not be considered a successor under this subparagraph if the employer purchases a company with a lower rate into which employees with job functions unrelated to the business endeavors of the predecessor are transferred for the purpose of acquiring the low rate and avoiding payment of contributions. As used in this paragraph, Notwithstanding s. 443.036(14), the term "contributions," as used in this paragraph, means all indebtedness to the tax collection service provider, including, but not limited to, interest, penalty, collection fee, and service fee.

- 2. A successor employer must accept the transfer of all of the predecessor employers' employment records within 30 days after the date of the official notification of liability by succession. If a predecessor employer has unpaid contributions or outstanding quarterly reports, the successor employer must pay the total amount with certified funds within 30 days after the date of the notice listing the total amount due. After the total indebtedness is paid, the tax collection service provider shall transfer the employment records of all of the predecessor employers to the successor employer's employment record. The tax collection service provider shall determine the contribution rate of the combined successor and predecessor employers upon the transfer of the employment records, as prescribed by rule, in order to calculate any change in the contribution rate resulting from the transfer of the employment records.
- 3.2. Regardless of whether a predecessor employer's employment record is transferred to a successor employer under

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this paragraph, the tax collection service provider shall treat the predecessor employer, if he or she subsequently employs individuals, as an employer without a previous employment record or, if his or her coverage is terminated under s. 443.121, as a new employing unit.

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4.3. The state agency providing reemployment assistance tax collection services may adopt rules governing the partial transfer of experience rating when an employer transfers an identifiable and segregable portion of his or her payrolls and business to a successor employing unit. As a condition of each partial transfer, these rules must require the following to be filed with the tax collection service provider: an application by the successor employing unit, an agreement by the predecessor employer, and the evidence required by the tax collection service provider to show the benefit experience and payrolls attributable to the transferred portion through the date of the transfer. These rules must provide that the successor employing unit, if not an employer subject to this chapter, becomes an employer as of the date of the transfer and that the transferred portion of the predecessor employer's employment record is removed from the employment record of the predecessor employer. For each calendar year after the date of the transfer of the employment record in the records of the tax collection service provider, the service provider shall compute the contribution rate payable by the successor employer or employing unit based on his or her employment record, combined with the transferred portion of the predecessor employer's employment record. These rules may also prescribe what contribution rates are payable by

the predecessor and successor employers for the period between the date of the transfer of the transferred portion of the predecessor employer's employment record in the records of the tax collection service provider and the first day of the next calendar year.

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5.4. This paragraph does not apply to an employee leasing company and client contractual agreement as defined in s. 443.036, except as provided in s. 443.1216(1)(a)2.a. The tax collection service provider shall, if the contractual agreement is terminated or the employee leasing company fails to submit reports or pay contributions as required by the service provider, treat the client as a new employer without previous employment record unless the client is otherwise eligible for a variation from the standard rate.

Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2013.