

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
80R11086 KSD-D

H.B. 550  
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Business & Commerce  
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Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Unemployment benefits are in place to ease the burden of job loss by allotting the newly unemployed financial assistance to aid the process of seeking new employment. Maintaining an independent source of income is critical for victims of domestic violence or stalking.

As proposed, H.B. 550 authorizes employees to use a protective order, a police record, or a physician's statement or other medical documentation as evidence of family violence against the employee for purposes of unemployment benefits. Under the current law, the employee must present all three forms of evidence to qualify. The bill also modifies the requirements for a physician's statement or medical documentation describing the family violence.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 204.022(a), Labor Code, as amended by Chapters 39, 493, and 728, Acts of the 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005, is reenacted and amended, to prohibit benefits computed on benefit wage credits of an employee or former employee from being charged to the account of an employer if the employee's last separation from the employer's employment before the employee's benefit year resulted from the employee leaving the employee's workplace to protect the employee from family violence or stalking as evidenced by a physician's statement or other medical documentation that describes the family violence against the employee that is recorded in any form or medium that identifies the employee as the patient, and relates to the history, diagnosis, treatment, or prognosis of the patient. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 204.022(c), Labor Code, to prohibit evidence regarding an employee described by Subsection (a)(11), rather than Subsection (a)(9), from being disclosed to any person without the consent of the employee except as provided by law.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 207.046(a), Labor Code, to provide that an individual is not disqualified for benefits under this subchapter if a physician's statement or other medical documentation that describes the family violence against the employee that is recorded in any form or medium that identifies the employee as the patient, and relates to the history, diagnosis, treatment, or prognosis of the patient. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 4. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 5. Provides that, to the extent of any conflict, this Act prevails over another Act of the 80th Legislature, Regular Session, 2007, relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in enacted codes.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.