

BIPARTISAN CONSENSUS FOR EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Under the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the pace of job loss has declined dramatically in recent months. However, because the recession was so deep, it will take more time to completely reverse the more than 6.9 million jobs lost since the beginning of the recession in 2007. Long-term unemployment has hit its highest rate since measuring began in 1948, with 5 million Americans out of work for more than six months. Over 300,000 jobless workers are expected to run out of unemployment compensation by the end of September. Therefore, Congress is taking action to provide up to an additional 13 weeks of extended unemployment benefits in states with high unemployment, where it is much more difficult for people to find new jobs, despite months of searching.

This legislation will not add to the deficit, but it will help ensure that Americans will be able to continue providing for their families – paying for groceries, filling their cars with gas, and making their mortgage payments on time – which will also continue to boost the economy.

Republicans Have Supported Extending Unemployment Benefits

Near the end of 2008, the House and Senate passed the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 with large bipartisan majorities:

- **October 3, 2008** → The House passed the legislation **368-28, with 142 Republican votes**
- **November 20, 2008** → The Senate passed the legislation **89-6, with 41 Republican votes**

Republicans have expressed support for extending unemployment benefits, acknowledging that the long-term unemployed need additional help as we continue to work to return jobs to our economy, and that providing this assistance helps grow the economy:

“We need to take care of those who are unemployed... We'll definitely support [extending unemployment insurance].” – Sen. Jim DeMint (R-SC), [8/2/09](#)

In April, House Republicans introduced a budget alternative that kept in place a provision from the Recovery Act that extended “unemployment insurance for those who have already lost their jobs.” – Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI), Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee, [4/1/09](#)

“We are writing to urge quick passage of legislation to extend several critical unemployment insurance assistance provisions... These policies have helped provide extended unemployment benefits for millions of workers affected by the recession, offered relief each month to struggling families across the country and have played a critical role in stabilizing the economy.” – Republican and Democratic Governors, [9/15/09](#)

Economists: Extending Benefits Helps Families, Stimulates Economy

Economists agree that extending unemployment benefits during an economic downturn is necessary to help families through the economic recovery and strengthen the economy itself:

“In addition to helping the workers themselves, the bill would help the economy by cushioning the income losses of jobless workers, enabling them to maintain a higher level of spending than they could without UI benefits, thereby supporting a higher level of overall economic activity.” – Chad Stone, Chief Economist, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [9/21/09](#)

“Extending UI [is one of] the most effective ways to prime the economy’s pump. A \$1 increase in UI benefits generates an estimated \$1.64 in near-term GDP.” – Mark Zandi, Moody’s Economy.com, [2008](#)