



**National Employment Law Project**

**From the National Employment Law Project**

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## **Jobless Benefits Extension Blocked Again by Single Opponent**

### **Obstruction Puts Nearly One Million at Risk of Losing Jobless Benefits in April**

Washington, DC – Today the National Employment Law Project released the following statement in response to the successful action of one senator to block, for a second time, the extension of existing federal jobless programs set to expire on April 5<sup>th</sup>. The obstruction, this time by Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK), could force as many as 1 million unemployed workers to lose benefits in April, halt vital training and education services, and significantly disrupt state agencies' efforts to administer benefits.

“It is unacceptable that Congress has, for a second time, failed to extend the existing federal benefits programs with so many people counting on this assistance. We have been down this road already and seen the turmoil it caused. Congress cannot continue to play games with people's lives. They need to get the job done, now,” said **Christine Owens, Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project.**

“One million people are now newly at risk of losing benefits in April because of Congress's failure to act, and 212,000 alone will lose benefits in the first week. It will be devastating if Congress takes a two-week break with such significant business left unfinished. There's no break in the crisis for unemployed workers. The House has passed an extension, and now the Senate needs to get it done before the program is slated to expire,” said Owens.

“The delay in the extension comes at great expense to jobless workers and the U.S. economy. There are now 14.9 million unemployed Americans and long-term unemployment afflicts 6.1 million – over 40 percent of the unemployed. Over 11 million jobless workers are collecting some form of unemployment insurance, including nearly 5.7 million receiving extensions. There is much work to be done and workers simply cannot afford to go through this benefits renewal drama every month or two. Congress must approve this stopgap extension immediately, and then after the recess, extend the jobless programs through the end of 2010 so that we do not find ourselves in this situation again,” said Owens.

While the current stand-off is occasioned by Senator Tom Coburn's (R-OK) displeasure that the 30-day extension would not be paid for with some budget offset, earlier this month eight Republican Senators joined all but one Democratic Senator in agreeing that unemployment insurance and COBRA extensions through the end of 2010 should be done through emergency spending. That led to the bi-partisan passage of the American Workers State and Business Relief

Act, introduced by Senators Reid and Baucus, which would extend unemployment benefits and COBRA programs until December 31<sup>st</sup>, at a price of \$70 billion over 10 years. The House has also approved a longer extension than the current 30-day stop-gap measure, and the two bills are awaiting reconciliation when the recess is over.

“It is time to close the loops and see this through to the finish. For the sake of millions of unemployed workers and the future of our economy, we cannot delay a full-year extension of jobless programs any longer,” concluded Owens.

NELP’s state-by-state estimates of “**Workers Prematurely Cut-Off of Federal Jobless Benefits During April 2010 Due to Expiration of the Recovery Act's UI Provisions**” can be found here: <http://www.nelp.org/page/-/UI/NELP.april.2010.exhaustions.pdf?nocdn=1>.

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# Workers Prematurely Cut-Off of Federal Jobless Benefits During April 2010 Due to Expiration of the Recovery Act's UI Provisions

National Employment Law Project, March 2010

State	Workers Prematurely Exhausting their Federal Benefits	Average Number of Workers Prematurely Exhausting Federal Benefits, per Week
Alabama	17,373	3,861
Alaska	336	75
Arizona	32,430	7,207
Arkansas	15,349	3,411
California	9,850	2,189
Colorado	23,825	5,294
Connecticut	964	214
Delaware	4,089	909
District of Columbia	4,508	1,002
Florida	107,902	23,978
Georgia	51,776	11,506
Hawaii	4,329	962
Idaho	437	97
Illinois	71,029	15,784
Indiana	43,778	9,729
Iowa	10,921	2,427
Kansas	461	102
Kentucky	15,985	3,552
Louisiana	12,349	2,744
Maine	4,353	967
Maryland	18,089	4,020
Massachusetts	41,293	9,176
Michigan	59,078	13,128
Minnesota	1,123	249
Mississippi	10,250	2,278
Missouri	23,934	5,319
Montana	0	0
Nebraska	4,979	1,107
Nevada	1,426	317
New Hampshire	147	33
New Jersey	3,617	804
New Mexico	250	56
New York	93,263	20,725
North Carolina	3,774	839
North Dakota	968	215
Ohio	58,940	13,098
Oklahoma	11,768	2,615
Oregon	1,303	290
Pennsylvania	3,855	857
Rhode Island	455	101
South Carolina	28,494	6,332
South Dakota	656	146
Tennessee	31,136	6,919
Texas	83,146	18,477
Utah	8,583	1,907
Vermont	107	24
Virginia	21,594	4,799
Washington	943	210
West Virginia	6,193	1,376
Wisconsin	1,656	368
Wyoming	2,997	666
<b>Total</b>	<b>956,064</b>	<b>212,459</b>

Note: This chart represents the number of people who will lose access to all forms of federal jobless benefits with the expiration of the Recovery Act on April 5th, including the 34-53 week temporary program of Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) and the 13-20 week permanent program of Extended Benefits (EB). In a number of states (AK, CA, CT, ID, KS, MN, MT, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NC, OR, PA, RI, VT, WA, WI), the EB program will continue to provide 13-20 weeks of benefits beyond April 5th to those who have run out of state benefits or not reached the end of the EUC program. Thus, these workers have not been included in the chart. However, because the Recovery Act's provision which required the federal government to cover 100 percent of the costs will expire, the state unemployment insurance trust funds are now paying for 50 percent of the EB program in these states.