



**NELP:**  
**1.2 Million to Lose Jobless Benefits in June if Congress  
Fails to Act**

*Safety Net Down to the Wire – Again*

**House Must Pass H.R. 4213 to Finally Pass Extension Through End of  
2010**

Washington, DC – New estimates from the National Employment Law Project show that as many as 1.2 million jobless workers will be cut off from federal unemployment benefits in June should Congress fail to extend provisions set to expire next week. The National Employment Law Project today urged the House of Representatives to take immediate action to ensure that jobless benefits and COBRA supplements are not allowed to lapse – and finally extend the provisions through the end of the year.

“There they go again: since March, the House and Senate have been sitting on legislation to extend unemployment insurance and health care programs the long-term unemployed need to survive, but here we are, five days out from the Memorial Day recess, and Congress has yet to act on one of the most crucial pieces of legislation affecting the unemployed in 2010. The benefits of 1.2 million jobless workers are on the line, along with a much-delayed extension to carry benefits to the end of the year. This is unacceptable; it’s time to get the job done. No more stop-gaps and no more delays,” said **Christine Owens, Executive Director of the National Employment Law Project.**

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the two-month extension of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act benefits that Congress passed in April – which included unemployment aid, the COBRA subsidy and an additional \$25 per week in benefit checks – will expire. Twice this year Congress has already missed deadlines to extend jobless benefits, and already the delay in extending them again has triggered more anxiety and frustration for hundreds of thousands of workers. The Department of Labor has reported that more than 300,000 workers will run out of benefits by June 12<sup>th</sup>, the end of the first week Congress returns from recess.

Unemployment blanketed 15.3 million workers in April, and 6.7 million – or almost 46% of the unemployed – were long-term unemployed. Nearly ten (9.8) million Americans are collecting some form of jobless benefits, and even with recent job growth, there are still 5.6 unemployed workers for every job opening. Unemployment is expected to remain above 9% through the end of 2010, and still above 8% through 2011 – underscoring the

need for a comprehensive, assertive package to support the jobless through the end of the year.

“Unemployed Americans are pulling their hair out – and they are looking to Congress for help. Even if it means staying in Washington as the Congressional recess approaches, the unemployment bill must move forward. Taking a break without extending the unemployment program will break faith with the millions of jobless workers Congress is leaving behind,” said Owens.

Today NELP also released a short paper entitled “[\*\*Beyond Sound Bites: Understanding the Real Impact of Unemployment Insurance on the Severity of Unemployment,\*\*](#)” which reviews current research on the link between joblessness and unemployment insurance and debunks claims, primarily by conservative commentators and policymakers, that jobless benefits prolong unemployment.

“With debate over the extensions likely to ensue, we are going to hear more claims that extending unemployment benefits worsens the jobless situation. These claims overstate the actual recent research findings about what is known as the ‘disincentive’ effect of UI on job searching, and they ignore the countervailing positive effects of jobless benefits for workers and the economy,” said Owens.

The NELP paper is available at <http://www.nelp.org/page/-/UI/DisincentiveUI.pdf>.