

Hanging On By a Thread:

Renew Federal Unemployment Insurance to Aid Families, Boost Stalled Economy; Nearly Two Million Jobless Workers Face Premature Cut-Off in January 2012

By the National Employment Law Project¹

It was nearly four years ago that the recession claimed its first victims, yet millions of hard-working families are still facing the toughest job market since the Great Depression. And now there's serious talk of a possible double-dip recession, which could land another blow to the workers and employers who are on the front lines of the stalled-out economy.

The federal program of extended unemployment insurance, which runs out December 31st, is the lifeline that sustains these workers and the local businesses hit hardest by the severe economic downturn. Ms. Dawn Deane, who was laid off in late June 2011, is one of the nearly seven million workers now surviving on a modest unemployment check. Her unemployment insurance eligibility will end prematurely in the New Year unless Congress renews the federal program.

A 49-year-old mother of two from Philadelphia, Ms. Deane was laid off from her job as a human resource manager, where she had earned a respectable salary working for an educational non-profit. With more than 20 years of professional experience, a modest home to maintain, and a nine-year-old daughter to support, Ms. Deane and her family now count on her unemployment insurance to sustain themselves while she continues her determined, daily job search.

"The unemployment insurance is helping me manage and maintain my mortgage, utilities, and car payments—helping us just barely stay above water," says Deane. "Without it, I'd just have nothing while I look for new work—not even heat, electricity, or a phone. And if it got cut off, I would fall behind on my mortgage, probably face foreclosure, have my car repossessed, and end up applying for welfare."

¹ Several NELP staff contributed to this report, including Rebecca Dixon, Maurice Emsellem, Mike Evangelist, Mitchell Hirsch, Claire McKenna, Christine Riordan, and George Wentworth.

Ms. Deane is not alone in facing the harsh prospect of supporting a family while unemployed and fearing that unemployment insurance will no longer be there for her in the New Year if she still hasn't found a new job. As reported below, nearly two million workers will lose their unemployment insurance in January alone, following the expiration of the federal program. Abruptly terminating unemployment benefits after 26 weeks (or less in some states) would not only plunge millions of American families into deeper financial crisis, but would also throw yet another obstacle in the path of economic growth for states and communities that are already laboring to sustain some semblance of recovery.

Given the distressing economic headwinds, including the record levels of long-term unemployment, Congress should support and pass the President's proposal to reauthorize federal unemployment insurance programs through 2012. It is also incumbent upon the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (the Congressional "Super Committee"), which has until November 23rd to agree on its deficit reduction recommendations, to forge consensus in support of this critical economic lifeline.

This paper features a discussion of the following factors that favor prompt passage of the federal extension of unemployment insurance through 2012.

- In January alone, 1.8 million workers who currently receive federal unemployment insurance or would have begun to receive it will be cut off if Congress does not renew the program before it expires on December 31st.
- Of these 1.8 million workers, more than 430,000 were laid off as recently as July and will reach the end of their state benefits in January without the prospect of any federal relief, if Congress fails to act. Many more may join their ranks as state unemployment rates continue to climb.
- Nearly 650,000 workers in 33 states and the District of Columbia will face an immediate "hard" cut-off of their benefits in January, after struggling to find work and pay their bills for over a year in most cases. There is no phase-out allowing these workers to collect the remainder of their final 13 to 20 weeks of benefits.
- Since the data were first reported in 1948, the nation has never experienced the record stretch of high unemployment and long-term joblessness that now plagues the economy. Currently, the unemployment rate has been above 8.5 percent for more than 31 months, and for nearly two years, over 40 percent of the unemployed have been out of work for more than six months.
- Congress has never cut back on federally-funded unemployment insurance when unemployment was anywhere near this high for this long. The highest unemployment rate when federal benefits were cut by Congress was in 1985, at 7.2 percent. Today, the unemployment rate stands at 9.1 percent.

- Due largely to the federal extension, in 2010, unemployment insurance kept 3.2 million people (including nearly one million children) from falling into poverty. Were it not for unemployment insurance, the number of people falling into poverty would have more than doubled in 2010.
- When federal UI payments peaked in the fourth quarter of 2009, the program saved or created 1.1 million jobs on an annualized basis.
- Recent research and two new state surveys strongly indicate that workers who are receiving unemployment insurance are more likely, not less, to stay in the labor market and actively seek work despite dim prospects for reemployment.

Basics of Federal Unemployment Insurance Programs That Expire December 31st

Federally-funded unemployment insurance has provided a lifeline during this record period of high unemployment, both to the nation's hardest hit workers and to the struggling U.S. economy. In the past three years, more than 17 million unemployed Americans have applied for and received federally-funded unemployment benefits, contributing nearly \$180 billion in hard cash to those communities struggling with severe unemployment.

Congress and President Bush responded in relatively timely fashion to the recession when the temporary program of federal unemployment insurance, called Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC), was first enacted in July 2008. Seven months into the recession, the unemployment rate was 5.8 percent, but it skyrocketed past 10 percent in the 18 months that followed. As a result of the steady rise in unemployment, Congress has reauthorized EUC nine times (or 10 times, counting the original law), often for limited stretches of time. Most recently, in December 2010, the program was reauthorized through the end of 2011.

The EUC program provides 34 to 53 weeks of benefits, depending on the severity of a state's unemployment rate.¹ In addition, most states provide another 13 to 20 weeks of benefits under a separate permanent federal program called Extended Benefits (EB). Normally, states are required to share 50 percent of the EB costs, which is why only a small number of states have historically chosen to take part in the program. However, under the Recovery Act, Congress authorized full federal funding of EB benefits, creating a powerful financial incentive for qualifying states (those with unemployment rates above 6.5 percent) to take up the optional program.

Authorization for both the EUC and full federal funding of the EB "federal sharing" programs is scheduled to expire on December 31st. The President's American Jobs Act of 2011 (S. 1660/ H.R. 2421) has proposed that both programs be renewed for another year, at a cost of \$44 billion. The

Super Committee is in a key position to endorse the President's proposal by November 23rd, and send a strong bipartisan message to Congress that the federal program of unemployment insurance is a cost-efficient and highly effective strategy to help revive the nation's struggling economy. Congress should act without delay to ensure that the federal unemployment insurance programs remain up and running throughout all of 2012.

With Record Stretch of High Unemployment and Long-Term Joblessness, It's No Time to Cut Federal Unemployment Insurance

Never in the history of the unemployment program have federal jobless benefits been eliminated, or even reduced, when unemployment rates were as high or durations of unemployment as prolonged as they are today. With workers facing a "national crisis" of long-term unemployment,² it is not the time to change course and terminate federal support for jobless workers and their families.

Although the Great Recession officially ended more than two years ago, in June 2009, high unemployment and declining job growth since then have done little to end the hardship experienced by workers—14 million of whom remain unemployed, with another nine million underemployed. With unusually protracted spells of unemployment, an overwhelming jobs deficit, the refusal of some employers to even consider the unemployed for open jobs, and a persistent, long-term scarcity of job openings, one in six working-age adults is battling for a fighting chance of finding full-time work.

The troubling reality is that the economy is facing a crisis of confidence, with both consumers and businesses "frozen in place," says Mark Zandi, one of the nation's leading economic forecasters.³ This situation raises serious concerns that the economy could plunge once more into recession unless decisive action is taken at the federal level. As Zandi concludes, "[w]hether the current crisis of confidence produces a double-dip recession depends critically on how policymakers respond. Washington must act aggressively to stabilize sentiment and lift flagging expectations."⁴

Several staggering trends underscore that the last two years of "recovery" have brought little respite for unemployed workers and their families:

- The unemployment rate, which currently stands at 9.1 percent, has remained near or above 9 percent for almost two-and-a-half straight years.
- Nearly 45 percent of the unemployed—more than six million people—have been out of work for six months or longer. The rate of long-term unemployment has been at or above 40 percent for nearly the past two years, or 22 consecutive months - the longest stretch of such high long-term unemployment since these numbers were first reported in 1948.

- The average duration of joblessness has climbed upwards to 40.5 weeks, or over nine months—practically double the average time someone spent unemployed in June 2009, at the official end of the Great Recession.

These alarming unemployment trends surpass those of any comparable period in recent history. Even the severe recessions of the early 1980s, which resulted in a peak unemployment rate of nearly 11 percent, were characterized by long-term unemployment trends that pale in magnitude compared to where we are today. In 1983, the average period of unemployment peaked at 21.2 weeks, and long-term unemployment affected, at most, 26 percent of the unemployed (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Long-Term Unemployment Has Affected Larger Portions of Unemployed Than Ever Before, and Remains Alarming High



In fact, the economy has stalled so severely that the unemployment outlook has recently worsened. In August of this year, the Congressional Budget Office reported that it expected unemployment to fall to only 8.5 percent by the end of 2012, by which point we will have had nearly four years of unemployment at or above this rate. Four years of such high unemployment is unparalleled in any recent recession, and currently, such high unemployment does not show any sign of letting up soon: there are simply not enough jobs to go around. For more than two-and-a-half years, the number of unemployed has outstripped the number of available job openings by more than four to one.

Historically, when the unemployment situation has been so severe, federal unemployment insurance programs have been there both to keep jobless workers and their families afloat and make sure that the economy does not slide backwards. In fact, Congress has never allowed federal emergency

unemployment insurance programs to expire when unemployment has been so high and economic recovery so precarious. Since the 1950s, such federal programs have never been terminated when the unemployment rate was above 7.2 percent (Figure 2)—a rate which, in the current downturn, we surpassed after only a year into the recession and have not come near to approaching in the last two years of recovery. By comparison, when the federal programs were reauthorized last year, the unemployment rate stood at 9.4 percent.

Figure 2. Unemployment Rates at Time of Federal UI Expiration During Prior Recessions

Expiration Date	Unemployment Rate, Prior Month	Citation
April 1, 1959	5.6	PL 85-441
April 1, 1962	5.6	PL 87-6
March 31, 1973	5.0	PL 92-329
November 1, 1977	6.8	PL 95-19
March 31, 1985	7.2	PL 98-135
February 5, 1994	6.6	PL 103-152
December 21, 2003	5.8	PL 108-26
December 31, 2011	9.1 (Sept. 2011)	

Nearly Two Million Workers to Run Out of Unemployment Insurance in January If Program Lapses

Unless Congress reauthorizes the current federal extension programs before the December 31st deadline, millions of workers and their families will be left without their primary means of support to buy food, pay the rent or mortgage, and cover their other most basic necessities.

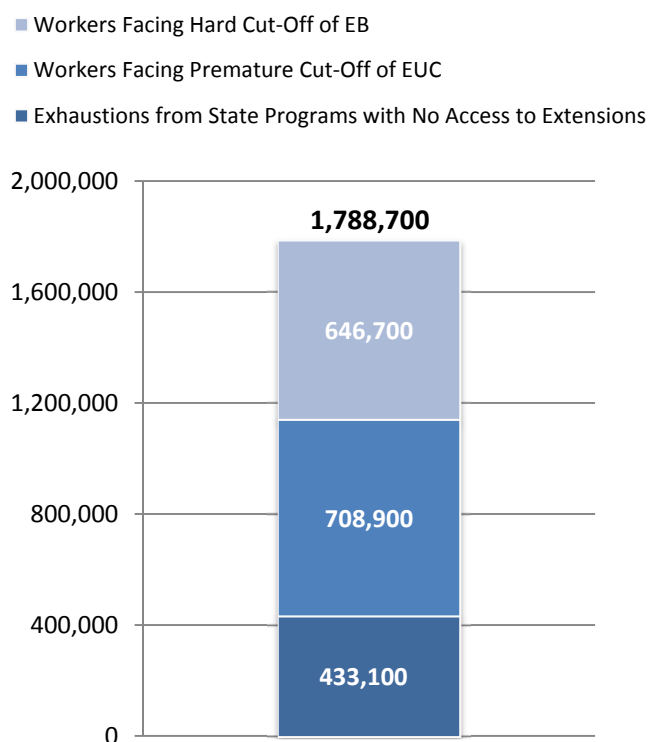
In January alone, an estimated 1.8 million workers will prematurely run out of their benefits (Appendix, Table 1 and Figure 3, below). Over the course of 2012, the Administration projects that at least six million workers will not have access to federal unemployment insurance if the program is not reauthorized.⁵ Of these nearly two million workers who will prematurely lose their benefits in January, a significant number (433,100) were laid off as recently as July 2011. They will reach the end of their regular state benefits (up to 26 weeks) but will not be permitted to move onto the EUC program. As state unemployment rates continue to climb, particularly in the South, this means that no federal relief will be available to fill the growing void.

The second and largest group consists of workers (709,000) who have already exhausted their state benefits and are currently receiving EUC. After the expiration date, these workers will finish their current “tier” of benefits (currently, states offer up to four tiers totaling 34 to 53 weeks), and will not

be permitted to move onto the next tier that would otherwise be available to them. For example, a worker who runs out of her first 20-week tier of benefits after December 31st will not qualify for the next 14-week tier if the program is not reauthorized. In most states, this includes workers who will exhaust EUC Tiers 3 or 4 and who will then not be able to access EB.

The third and final group of workers has been out of work for the longest amount of time. These roughly 647,000 workers have exhausted regular benefits as well as their state's final tier of EUC and are now receiving up to 13 to 20 weeks of compensation under the EB program. Currently, 33 states and the District of Columbia offer long-term unemployed workers EB. Although these workers are often most in need of support, having been surviving on their modest unemployment benefits for the longest, they now face a hard cut-off of their benefits in January, rather than a phased-in elimination as provided those workers who are on EUC.⁶

Figure 3. 1.8 Million Workers Face Cut-Off of Federal Extensions in January 2012



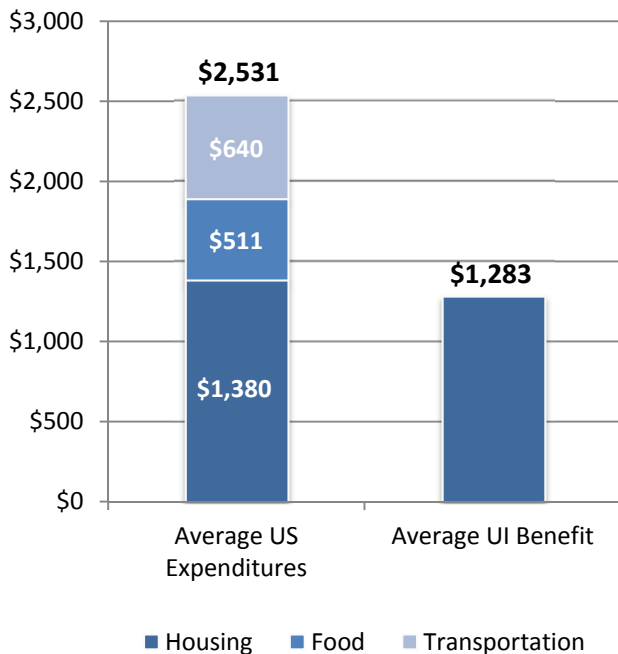
Unemployment Benefits Hold the Line Against Poverty, and They Do Not Deter the Unemployed from Seeking Work

Consistent with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's ambitious vision for the unemployment insurance program when it was created more than 75 years ago, the benefits have made all the difference in the lives of millions of families suffering from the fallout of the jobs crisis. New evidence from the states also puts to rest the exaggerated claims of some detractors that the modest unemployment benefits have motivated unemployed workers to avoid seeking work. The reality, especially in today's severe labor market, could not be further from the truth.

Today's average unemployed worker on the federal extension receives just \$296 in weekly unemployment benefits. That represents only 50 percent of the income needed to cover the most basic necessities of food, housing, and transportation, as measured by the annual Consumer Expenditure Survey.⁷ While the average American family spends \$1,380 per month on housing alone, the average monthly unemployment benefit is only \$1,283. Put simply, today's unemployed workers

are not living the highlife on jobless benefits.

Figure 4. Average Monthly Unemployment Extension Benefits Meets Only Half of Basic Household Expenditures



Yet these benefits, modest as they are, have gone a long way to prevent economic hardship for millions of families since the recession began in 2007. In 2010 alone, according to recently released Census figures, unemployment benefits kept 3.2 million Americans out of poverty. The Census Bureau reports that in 2010, poverty increased by 2.6 million people since 2009; however, the unemployment insurance program kept an even greater number of Americans from slipping into poverty. Indeed, were it not for unemployment benefits, the increase in the number of Americans in poverty would have more than doubled, from 2.6 million to 5.8 million people. To put these figures in perspective, the number of people protected against destitution has increased nearly seven-fold since 2007 thanks to the unemployment program.

Significantly, unemployment insurance has played a more prominent role in alleviating child poverty during the course of the recession. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the share of families with at least one member unemployed during the year climbed to 12.4 percent in 2010, the highest level since the data series began in 1994. This 12.4 percent figure, which represents a total of 9.7 million families, was nearly double the 6.3 percent of families reporting at least one jobless member in 2007, when the recession officially began. In 2010, children accounted for over a quarter (27 percent) of all those who were kept out of poverty due solely to the support their families received in the form of unemployment benefits (900,000 in total).

Thus, the federal investment in unemployment benefits has an immediate payoff for those kept out of poverty, but it also produces long-term dividends for children and families given the social costs associated with child poverty and severe economic hardship. Children who experience economic hardship are more likely to drop out of school, suffer from poor health, and experience difficulty maintaining stable employment as adults. The National Center for Children in Poverty has documented the invaluable role that economic stability plays in laying the groundwork for later school achievement, economic productivity, and responsible citizenship.

Figure 5. Breakdown of People Kept Out of Poverty by Unemployment Insurance (2007-2010)

Year	Children Under 18	Adults 18-64	Adults 65 and Older	Total for All ages	Children Under 18	Adults 18-64	Adults 65 and Older
2007	164,000	309,000	14,000	488,000	34%	63%	3%
2008	292,000	595,000	18,000	905,000	32%	66%	2%
2009	956,000	2,265,000	101,000	3,322,000	29%	68%	3%
2010	900,000	2,300,000	100,000	3,200,000	27%	70%	3%

That brings us to the claims of some detractors, who maintain that unemployment insurance recipients prefer to collect an unemployment check rather than seek or accept work, despite the desperate economic circumstances of families surviving on their modest unemployment benefits. As recently documented by Professor Jesse Rothstein of the University of California at Berkeley, the research does not support this assertion. Evaluating the impact on the unemployment rate of workers collecting benefits under the recent federal extension, Rothstein concluded that the effects are “quite small, too small to outweigh the benefits on transfers to people who have been out of work for over a year in conditions where job finding prospects are bleak.”⁸

Moreover, new evidence from two states further debunks these exaggerated claims, which are divorced from the reality of unemployed families living in today’s economy. State agencies in Connecticut and Washington surveyed the conditions of workers who have reached the end of their state and federal jobless benefits. If, as the argument goes, unemployment benefits were motivating these workers to stay unemployed, it stands to reason that these workers would be looking harder and finding work just before their benefits run out, or shortly thereafter. But that is simply not the case, according to the results reported by these selected states.

In Connecticut, where 9.0 percent of working-age residents are unemployed, just one-quarter (24.7 percent) of the 43,172 workers who had exhausted their unemployment benefits over the second quarter of 2010 to the first quarter of 2011 were reemployed by the end of the next quarter. In Washington, where unemployment is 9.3 percent, the findings are consistent with the Connecticut survey.⁹ Of those workers who exhausted all of their unemployment benefits, just one-quarter (24.4 percent) had found work. Of those exhaustees who had not found work, more than 86 percent said they were *still* looking for a job—reaffirming that it is the desperate condition of the job market, and not unemployment benefits, that account for the continued high levels of long-term unemployment.

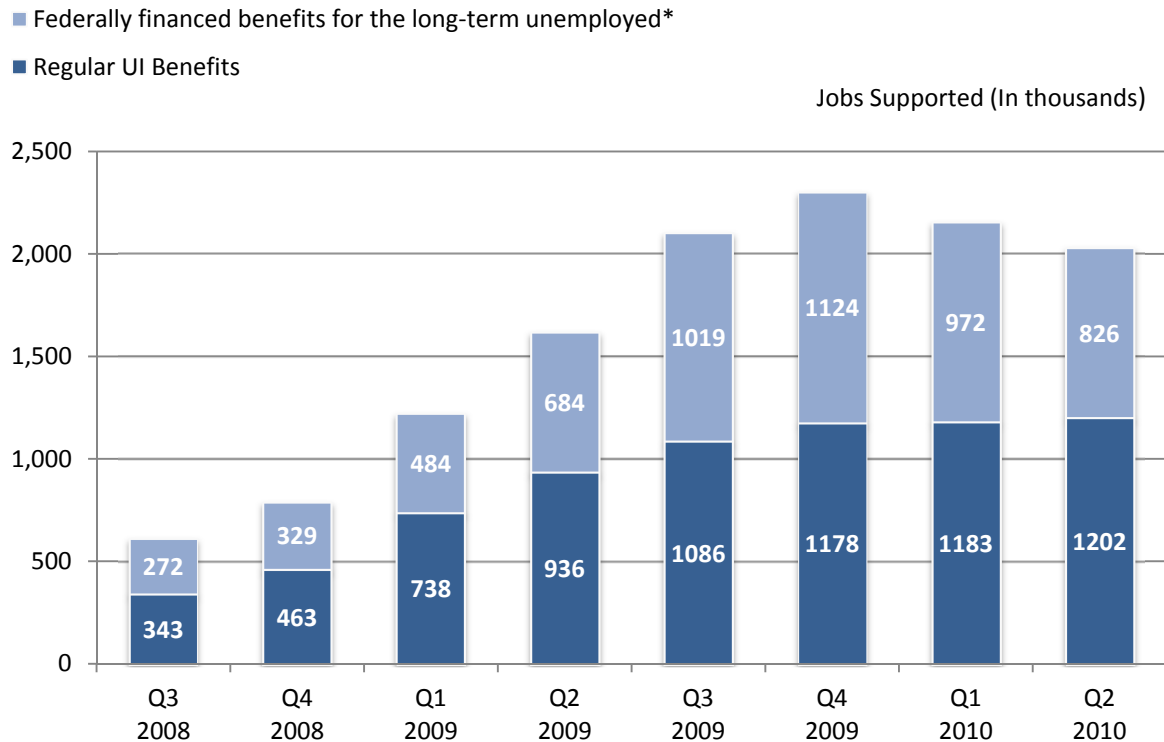
Federal Jobless Benefits Provide a Lifeline to the Stalled Economy

It is easy to appreciate how much unemployment insurance benefits mean to families struggling to get by when they are unemployed. A few hundred dollars a week may be enough to keep a family out of poverty or avoid losing a home while an unemployed family member scrambles to find work. Narrowly focusing on individual circumstances, however, ignores the equally important and positive role unemployment insurance plays in the overall economy and the broader labor market.

Over the years, several exhaustive studies have documented the “countercyclical” impact of unemployment insurance in lifting up an economy that has been beaten down by a recession. The most recent such study, authored by Wayne Vroman of the Urban Institute, reviewed the role unemployment benefits have played during the most recent economic downturn from 2007 to 2010.¹⁰ Consistent with the prior research, Vroman found that the nation’s economy grew by \$2 for every dollar spent on unemployment insurance during the latest recession, as unemployed workers spent their benefits in their communities at grocery stores, gas stations, and other retailers and service providers.

Moreover, billions of dollars that otherwise would not have been spent flowed directly from unemployed consumers to local businesses, which translated into hundreds of thousands of jobs created or saved by the federal unemployment insurance benefits. In fact, according to the Center for American Progress analysis of Vroman’s findings, unemployment benefits saved or created 2.3 million jobs in the fourth quarter of 2009 (on an annualized basis) (Figure 6).¹¹ Federal unemployment benefits were responsible for nearly half of those jobs (1.1 million), while regular state unemployment benefits accounted for the remaining half. The latest research provides compelling new proof that pulling the plug on the federal extension will produce a major drag on the nation’s economy.

Figure 6. Jobs Saved or Created by Unemployment Benefits Over the Great Recession



*Includes both the EUC and EB programs. Quarterly figures are annualized.

Source: Center for American Progress calculations from Vroman 2010.

Conclusion

Unless Congress acts by the end of December, nearly two million unemployed Americans will see their unemployment insurance benefits cut off in just one month after the program expires. Millions more will run out of state benefits without a federal back-up plan—breaking a compact with states and workers that has been in place for every economic downturn over the past 50 years. For the long-term unemployed, there has been no recovery, but federal unemployment benefits have made survival possible. Congress should respond to the emergency of long-term unemployment by following the President’s lead, and renew federal unemployment benefits.

About the National Employment Law Project

The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocates on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers. For more than 40 years, NELP has sought to ensure that work is an anchor of economic security and a ladder of economic opportunity for working families across America. In partnership with grassroots and national allies, NELP promotes policies to create good jobs, enforce hard-won workplace rights, and help unemployed workers regain their economic footing. For more about NELP, please visit www.nelp.org.

ENDNOTES

¹ The EUC program is divided into four “tiers” of benefits, which increase according to the state’s unemployment rate. Tier I (20 weeks) and Tier II (14 weeks) are available to all states, followed by Tier III (13 weeks), which is available to those states with a three-month average unemployment rate of 6 percent or higher, and Tier IV (6 weeks), which is available to those states with a three-month average unemployment rate over 8.5 percent.

² “Bernanke: Long-Term Unemployment a National Crisis,” Associated Press (September 29, 2011).

³ Mark Zandi, “An Analysis of the Obama Jobs Plan” (Moody’s Analytics, September 9, 2011).

⁴ Id.

⁵ “President Obama’s American Jobs Act.” White House Comprehensive Fact Sheet on the American Jobs Act, September 8, 2011. (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/09/08/fact-sheet-and-overview>)

⁶ In 23 states, benefits will “sunset” at various points over January once federal funding for the program ends. Because of an amendment to the program’s trigger that will expire December 31st, even those nine states that offer workers EB regardless of the availability of full federal funding will trigger off of the program and terminate payments at various points in January.

⁷ These monthly figures for selected expenditures are derived from the 2010 annualized data reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. See Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditures Survey News Release (September 27, 2011).

⁸ Rothstein, Jesse, “Unemployment Insurance and Job Search in the Great Recession” (NBER, July 2011), at page 35.

⁹ For the Washington survey results, see Washington State Employment Security Department, “Unemployment Benefits Exhaustee Survey Report” (July 2011). The findings from Connecticut are drawn from “Following Connecticut’s Unemployment Insurance Claimants Through the Recession,” by Manisha Srivastava, Connecticut Department of Labor, Office of Research, October 2011.

¹⁰ Vroman, Wayne, “The Role of Unemployment Insurance as an Automatic Stabilizer During a Recession” (Urban Institute, 2010), Table 4.3 Real GDP and Real Extended Benefits, 2008Q1 to 2010Q2.

¹¹ Boushey, Heather and Matt Separa, “Unemployment Insurance Dollars Create Millions of Jobs” (Center for American Progress, 2011).

1.8 Million Face Cut-Off of Unemployment Benefits in January 2012 Due to Congress's Failure to Reauthorize Federal Extensions

National Employment Law Project, October 2011

State	Workers Exhausting State Benefits with No Access to Federal Extensions	Workers Facing Cut-off from Emergency Unemployment Compensation	Workers Facing Hard Cut-off from Extended Benefits	Total
Alabama	5,600	10,000	9,100	24,700
Alaska	1,300	2,100	0	3,400
Arizona	9,300	11,900	0	21,200
Arkansas	3,800	4,100	0	7,900
California	70,600	122,500	112,300	305,400
Colorado	5,300	13,400	11,300	30,000
Connecticut	5,900	12,800	11,700	30,400
Delaware	1,200	1,700	2,100	5,000
District of Columbia	1,500	2,500	2,200	6,200
Florida	28,900	50,300	51,800	131,000
Georgia	12,600	27,800	28,500	68,900
Hawaii	1,400	1,600	0	3,000
Idaho	1,700	4,700	4,700	11,100
Illinois	15,100	35,800	33,700	84,600
Indiana	8,500	20,600	14,400	43,500
Iowa	2,800	4,100	0	6,900
Kansas	3,400	3,300	4,200	10,900
Kentucky	4,600	9,200	9,500	23,300
Louisiana	4,400	4,400	0	8,800
Maine	1,200	2,200	1,800	5,200
Maryland	5,800	4,000	4,500	14,300
Massachusetts	10,500	11,600	11,900	34,000
Michigan	19,800	26,100	20,800	66,700
Minnesota	13,500	6,900	7,700	28,100
Mississippi	3,500	5,800	0	9,300
Missouri	6,300	15,100	12,000	33,400
Montana	1,000	1,200	0	2,200
Nebraska	1,600	1,300	0	2,900
Nevada	5,400	10,900	9,900	26,200
New Hampshire	900	500	0	1,400
New Jersey	22,000	29,000	34,900	85,900
New Mexico	2,600	3,700	3,200	9,500
New York	30,700	47,100	48,200	126,000
North Carolina	13,100	28,900	27,700	69,700
North Dakota	500	200	0	700
Ohio	9,400	22,100	26,400	57,900
Oklahoma	2,900	1,700	0	4,600
Oregon	6,800	11,600	13,500	31,900
Pennsylvania	21,200	30,300	23,100	74,600
Rhode Island	2,400	3,100	3,300	8,800
South Carolina	5,700	13,000	11,700	30,400
South Dakota	100	100	0	200
Tennessee	8,900	15,700	15,900	40,500
Texas	24,300	33,500	44,700	102,500
Utah	1,900	2,700	0	4,600
Vermont	500	300	0	800
Virginia	5,500	10,100	0	15,600
Washington	7,200	12,700	15,300	35,200
West Virginia	1,300	2,300	3,300	6,900
Wisconsin	8,300	11,800	11,400	31,500
Wyoming	400	600	0	1,000
United States	433,100	708,900	646,700	1,788,700

Premature cut-offs include: 1. Recipients who will run out of their regular state benefits and cannot move on to EUC; 2. Recipients who will run out of their current EUC tier and cannot move on to the next tier available in their state, or who will run out of their last EUC tier and cannot not move onto EB, if available; and 3. Recipients enrolled in the EB program during January 2012, who will face a hard cut-off of their EB benefits upon expiration of the program in their state. Because of an amendment to the program's trigger "look-back" that will expire December 31st, nine states with permanent EB provisions will trigger off of the program and have cut-offs from regular state benefits, the EUC program, and EB.

For further explanation, please email cmckenna@nelp.org or click here: http://www.nelp.org/explanation_cutoffs.