

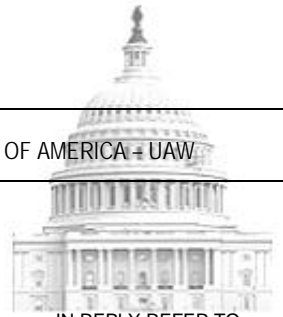


INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA - UAW

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IN REPLY REFER TO

February 22, 2010

1757 N STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
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Dear Senator:

Next Sunday, February 28, the unemployment and COBRA benefits enacted in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) expire, putting over five million jobless Americans at risk of losing their federal benefits. The UAW strongly urges the Senate to take up immediately a stand-alone bill that will extend the ARRA benefits for the unemployed until the end of this year.

The jobless aid included in the ARRA has been a boon not only to individual displaced workers and their families, but also to the national economy. The Congressional Budget Office recently affirmed that among various policy options, unemployment benefits provide the most significant stimulus to the economy.

The nation and its working families are still struggling with an economic collapse of near-historic proportions. The official unemployment rate is 9.7 percent and is expected to remain high for the rest of this year. Long-term unemployment, defined as looking for work for more than six months, comprises over 40 percent of jobless workers, the highest level since 1948, when records began.

The most recently Congressional extension of the ARRA unemployment benefits, in December 2009, was for only two months. As a result of this short-term extension, over the past week or so, states have been forced to spend limited resources notifying workers that the program will end on February 28. These notifications cause confusion and panic among recipients who are reliant on these benefits to feed their families and to pay their mortgages.

For this reason, the UAW strongly urges the Senate to approve legislation extending the unemployment benefits in the ARRA until the end of this year. Thank you for considering our views on this priority issue.

Sincerely,

Alan Reuther
Legislative Director

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