To provide for unemployment benefits to workers affected by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 2020

Mr. Kilmer (for himself, Ms. Herrera Beutler, and Mr. Rutherford) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To provide for unemployment benefits to workers affected by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Coronavirus Worker Relief Act”.

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS OR DISASTER DECLARATIONS FOR CORONAVIRUS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the definitions in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122) shall apply.
(b) Emergency Declarations or Disaster Declarations for 2019 Novel Coronavirus.—If the President issues an emergency declaration or disaster declaration for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus for a State or Indian Tribe under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191), the emergency declaration or disaster declaration shall be deemed to be a major disaster declared by the President for the purpose of carrying out section 410 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5177).

(c) Additional Eligibility Criteria.—In addition to the eligibility criteria for individuals established under section 410 of Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5177), individuals in an area for which an emergency declaration or disaster declaration for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus described in subsection (b) is declared shall be eligible for unemployment assistance under such section 410 if—

(1) the individual has experienced a week of unemployment in the area with an active emergency declaration or disaster declaration for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus, and as a result of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus;

(2) the individual has good cause to voluntarily reduce regular work hours or refuse a bona fide
offer of employment, or, in the case of an unem-
ployed self-employed individual, refuse to resume or
commence suitable self-employment, for a reason
such as illness or incapacity, family crises, or
changed individual or family circumstances in the
area for which the emergency declaration or disaster
declaration was issued, and as a result of the 2019
Novel Coronavirus; or

(3) the individual is unable to work due to the
result of the immediate Federal, State, Tribal, or
local government response to the 2019 Novel
Coronavirus, such as—

(A) the inaccessibility of the place of em-
ployment in the area for which the emergency
declaration or disaster declaration was issued
due to closure of the place of employment by or
at the request of the Federal, State, Tribal, or
local government as a result of the 2019 Novel
Coronavirus; or

(B) the employer of the individual, or the
business in the case of a unemployed self-em-
ployed individual, prior to the emergency decl-
oration or disaster declaration being issued, re-
ceived at least a significant amount of the rev-
enue or income of the employer or business, as
the case may be, from entities that—

(i) are located in the area for which
the emergency declaration or disaster dec-
laration was issued; and

(ii) were closed by the Federal, State,
Tribal, or local government in immediate
response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

(d) Minimum Amount of Assistance.—The assist-
ance authorized under this section for a week of unemploy-
ment shall be not less than the weekly amount authorized
under the unemployment compensation law of the State
for which the emergency declaration or disaster declara-
tion was issued.

(e) Waiver of State Requirements.—Notwith-
standing State law, for purposes of assistance authorized
under this section—

(1) the requirement that an individual be able
to work, available to work, and actively seeking work
shall not apply; and

(2) compensation under section 410 of Robert
T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5177) shall be made to an indi-
vidual otherwise eligible for such compensation without any waiting period.