

Statement on Signing the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Amendments of 1993

March 4, 1993

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 920, the “Emergency Unemployment Compensation Amendments of 1993.” This legislation will provide critical assistance to the unemployed and their families by extending the Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program—which is scheduled to expire March 6—through October 2, 1993. In addition, the legislation includes an innovative worker profiling program to encourage States to use the Unemployment Insurance system to link permanently displaced workers to reemployment services early in their period of unemployment and facilitate their transition to new jobs.

With the EUC program due to expire this Saturday, I commend the Congress for its swift action to ensure that there will be continued help for millions of jobless Americans who want to work to support their families but cannot find jobs. I believe that, as a Nation, we have a moral obligation, as well as an economic interest, to help these families stay afloat while they attempt to find jobs.

While there have been recent signs of improvement in the economy, this improvement has regrettably not extended to the area of employment. The unemployment rate has been over 7 percent for 14 consecutive months and the current rate is higher than the rate that existed when the EUC program was originally enacted. Moreover, the current labor market is, in many respects, weaker than it was at what was considered the worst point of the recession. For example, the rates at which the unemployed

are now exhausting their regular State benefits and the average length of time the unemployed are now receiving benefits are significantly higher than they were at the bottom of the recession.

H.R. 920 combines compassion with a healthy dose of common sense. It not only provides extended income support to help the unemployed with grocery bills, mortgages, car and tuition payments, and other expenses, but also offers a means to help target reemployment services to the structurally unemployed so they can get back to work.

Enactment of this bill is an important first step. While there are funds available to pay EUC benefits for a few more weeks, the funds for the balance of the extension are included as part of my economic stimulus package. The EUC extension will help sustain the unemployed until we are successful in creating more jobs. It is therefore also imperative that we now work together to enact quickly the stimulus package, as well as the long-term public investment and deficit reduction proposals I have presented. These actions will ensure strong, sustained economic growth and significantly increase the job opportunities available to the American people.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 4, 1993.

NOTE: H.R. 920, approved March 4, was assigned Public Law No. 103–6.

Letter to the Acting Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency on Disaster Assistance for Washington

March 4, 1993

Dear Mr. Tidball:

I have determined that the damage in certain areas of the State of Washington, resulting from severe storms and high winds on January 20–21, 1993, is of sufficient severity and magnitude

to warrant a major disaster declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (“the Stafford Act”). I, therefore, declare that such a major disaster exists in the State of Washington.