

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield time to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) so that he may speak on the bill that just passed.

Mr. POMEROY. I thank my friend, because I wanted to say some words on behalf of Jobs Corps and missed by moments, apparently, the formal opportunity do that. I will add a statement to the RECORD.

But let me say as co-Chair of the Friends of Job Corps Caucus, I believe so strongly in the promise of Job Corps and admire its 45-year track record in providing at-risk youth the core job skills they need so that they might move forward and make something of their lives.

My statement will include data, including the 60,000 youth every year choosing to enroll in Job Corps, the 85 percent of Job Corps graduates that obtain the high school diploma or GED equivalent, graduate with jobs and job-related skills, pursuing service in the military, other alternatives.

I have seen firsthand in the Quentin Burdick Job Corps Center in Minot, North Dakota, youth that are getting after the business of turning their lives around and the new sense of self-esteem as they acquire skills, skills that will bring them jobs, jobs that will pay living wages so that they might have, for the first time, often, in the life of their family, a shot at breaking the cycle of poverty and leaving a better future for the children and grandchildren to follow.

There is a reason why for 45 years Republicans and Democrats alike have supported Job Corps: It works.

The President has told people contemplating walking away from school, not continuing their education, you are not only quitting on yourself, you are quitting on your country, because we need those skills. Well, for our country, I must say we must not quit on these young people, and that is why I look forward to the next 45 years of Job Corps support.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for this bill designating the post office located at 630 Northeast Killingsworth Avenue in Portland, Oregon, as the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Post Office.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., became one of the most important public figures of our times. His leadership during the Civil Rights Movement helped to make America the country it is today. Because of Dr. King's many accomplishments in the pursuit of justice and liberty, it is clear that he deserves this honor and recognition.

Dr. King began his career as a Baptist minister who was also a leading civil rights leader during the 1950s and 1960s. It's hard to forget Dr. King's stirring and often quoted "I Have a Dream" speech that established him as one of the great American orators of all time.

Dr. King's lifelong crusade to end all forms of racial inequity was instru-

mental in turning the entire country towards civil rights for all citizens. His cry against segregation and other forms of discrimination brought this issue to the forefront of American culture.

Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, which helped show the world that racial discrimination could be ended through nonviolent means. He was also awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom and Congressional Gold Medal. In recognition of his many accomplishments for our country, in 1983, Congress established a national holiday as a tribute to his memory.

As one of the most pivotal figures in the battle to end bigotry and discrimination on the basis of race, Dr. King led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955, helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, and was instrumental in orchestrating the famous Birmingham, Alabama, protests. Realizing that his message of freedom applied to all impoverished Americans, Dr. King expanded his crusade for fair treatment for all citizens. Dr. King expanded his message to apply to impoverished Americans.

Towards the end of his life, he expanded his outreach to all races and cultures. Dr. King dedicated his life to ensuring these principles this country holds so dear, those of liberty and justice for all citizens.

I would like to thank my respected colleague, EARL BLUMENAUER, for introducing this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present H.R. 2971 for consideration. This legislation, as my colleague noted, will designate the United States postal facility located at 630 Northeast Killingsworth Avenue, in Portland, Oregon, as the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Post Office.

Introduced on June 19, 2009, by my colleague, Representative EARL BLUMENAUER of Oregon, H.R. 2971 was favorably reported out of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee on July 10, 2009, by unanimous consent. Additionally, this legislation enjoys the support of the entire Oregon House delegation.

My friend from Utah has articulated very well the events, the life and legacy of Dr. King, from his leadership in helping to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 to his riveting "I Have a Dream" speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial not far from this spot, and also the passion of his pursuit of nonviolent protest to change opinions, attitudes and opportunity in this country.

Dr. King served to remind this Nation of its fundamental responsibility to safeguard the natural, God-given rights of all men and women, so that all people in this country would be free to pursue our goals and aspirations without limit.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that we can further honor the great life and

legacy of Dr. King by joining our colleague from the State of Oregon and supporting the passage of this legislation to designate the Northeast Killingsworth Avenue post office in his honor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2971.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., through the passage of H.R. 2971.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in June, I introduced a bill to name a post office in my district, northeast Portland, Oregon, the "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Post Office." Located at 630 Northeast Killingsworth Avenue, this post office shall serve as a daily reminder of the civil rights leader who, even now, inspires our Nation and serves as a catalyst for change.

In fact, this bill itself is a result of a community-led effort, and the hard work of two local letter carriers. In 2007, Mr. Jamie Partridge and Mr. Isham Harris collected employee signatures supporting this naming, as well as letters of support from several neighborhood associations. I am pleased to carry this effort forward in D.C., with the full support of the entire Oregon congressional delegation.

I thank the Committee on Government Oversight and Reform for working with me to ensure speedy passage of this bill through the House. I look forward to equally expeditious consideration in the Senate.

Mr. LYNCH. I yield back the remainder of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2971.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2009

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3548) to amend the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 to provide for the temporary availability of certain additional emergency unemployment compensation, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3548

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 "Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4002 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) FURTHER ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If, at the time that the amount added to an individual’s account under subsection (c)(1) (hereinafter ‘additional emergency unemployment compensation’) is exhausted or at any time thereafter, such individual’s State is in an extended benefit period (as determined under paragraph (2)), such account shall be further augmented by an amount (hereinafter ‘further additional emergency unemployment compensation’) equal to the lesser of—

“(A) 50 percent of the total amount of regular compensation (including dependents’ allowances) payable to the individual during the individual’s benefit year under the State law; or

“(B) 13 times the individual’s average weekly benefit amount (as determined under subsection (b)(2)) for the benefit year.

“(2) EXTENDED BENEFIT PERIOD.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a State shall be considered to be in an extended benefit period, as of any given time, if such a period would then be in effect for such State under the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 if—

“(A) section 203(d) of such Act—

“(i) were applied by substituting ‘6’ for ‘5’ each place it appears; and

“(ii) did not include the requirement under paragraph (1)(A) thereof; or

“(B) section 203(f) of such Act were applied to such State—

“(i) regardless of whether or not the State had by law provided for its application;

“(ii) by substituting ‘8.5’ for ‘6.5’ in paragraph (1)(A)(i) thereof; and

“(iii) as if it did not include the requirement under paragraph (1)(A)(ii) thereof.

“(3) COORDINATION RULE.—Notwithstanding an election under section 4001(e) by a State to provide for the payment of emergency unemployment compensation prior to extended compensation, such State may pay extended compensation to an otherwise eligible individual prior to any further additional emergency unemployment compensation, if such individual claimed extended compensation for at least 1 week of unemployment after the exhaustion of additional emergency unemployment compensation.

“(4) LIMITATION.—The account of an individual may be augmented not more than once under this subsection.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO NON-AUGMENTATION RULE.—Section 4007(b)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) by striking “then section 4002(c)” and inserting “then subsections (c) and (d) of section 4002”; and

(2) by striking “paragraph (2) of such section)” and inserting “paragraph (2) of such subsection (c) or (d) (as the case may be))”.

(c) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “Act;” and inserting “Act and the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009;”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply as if included in the enactment of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008, except that no amount shall be payable by virtue of such amendments with respect to any week of unemployment commencing before the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. 0.2 PERCENT FUTA SURTAX.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3301 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to rate of tax) is amended—

(1) by striking “through 2009” in paragraph (1) and inserting “through 2010”; and

(2) by striking “calendar year 2010” in paragraph (2) and inserting “calendar year 2011”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to wages paid after December 31, 2009.

SEC. 4. REPORTING OF FIRST DAY OF EARNINGS TO DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 453A(b)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653a(b)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting “the date services for remuneration were first performed by the employee,” after “of the employee.”.

(b) REPORTING FORMAT AND METHOD.—Section 453A(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653a(c)) is amended by inserting “, to the extent practicable,” after “Each report required by subsection (b) shall”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall take effect six months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) COMPLIANCE TRANSITION PERIOD.—If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) is required in order for a State plan under part D of title IV of the Social Security Act to meet the additional requirements imposed by the amendment made by subsection (a), the plan shall not be regarded as failing to meet such requirements before the first day of the second calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the effective date of such amendment. If the State has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session is deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

SEC. 5. COLLECTION IN ALL STATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION DUE TO FRAUD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (f) of section 6402 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking paragraph (3) and redesignating paragraphs (4) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (7), respectively.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to refunds payable on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 3548.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, across America, there are people who are hanging on by a thin, economic lifeline called unemployment insurance. Without the passage of this bill, that thread will break for over 1 million workers before the end of this

year, plunging them and their families into an economic abyss and threatening to reverse the positive signs we are beginning to see in the economy. We can prevent that this afternoon by passing this bill.

This legislation will provide an additional 13 weeks of extended benefits to individuals in hard-hit States, specifically those with a 3-month average unemployment rate at or above 8.5 percent. It’s important to note that this legislation is fully offset and does not increase the deficit.

At the beginning of this year, America felt the bare-knuckled brunt of what has already been called the Great Recession. Nearly three-quarters of a million jobs were lost in the month of January alone, and we met the crisis head on.

The steps we took earlier this year helped us turn away from an economic catastrophe and toward recovery. Don’t take my word for it. Former JOHN MCCAIN economic adviser Mark Zandi said, “Without the stimulus, job losses would be measurably worse.” But even as economic indicators show improvement, we know we cannot replace 7 million lost jobs overnight.

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Recovery will take time. There are still six unemployed workers for every available job, so extended unemployment compensation isn’t a convenience; it’s a necessity.

Since I introduced this legislation 2 weeks ago, my office phones have been ringing nonstop with calls from Americans all across the country who have exhausted or soon will exhaust their benefits, asking, When is it going to pass?

I heard it from paralegals who could not find a job because attorneys are competing against them for employment; from contractors who are still reeling from the collapse of the housing market; and from school teachers whose local school districts could not afford to keep them on the payroll.

Without quick action, they will become unable to afford their mortgages or health coverage. Providing these Americans with a modest economic lifeline is not only the humane thing to do, but it’s in the economic interest of the country.

Every UI dollar generates \$1.64 in positive impact in the economy. That supports existing jobs and our fragile housing market. In other words, UI, unemployment insurance, is a win for every American.

I urge all Members to support this bipartisan, budget-neutral bill to extend unemployment benefits.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. This legislation provides up to 3 months’ additional Federal extended unemployment benefits to long-term unemployed individuals in States where the unemployment rate is 8.5 percent or higher.

That's on top of the 18 months of State and Federal unemployment benefits already available in places with unemployment at those levels. With the passage of this bill, folks who are unemployed could potentially receive up to 21 months of combined unemployment benefits.

Right now, more than half of the States will benefit from this bill. An incredible 29 States are struggling with unemployment rates of 8.5 percent or higher. In my home State of Kentucky, the unemployment rate is 11.1 percent, leaving more than one out of every 10 Kentuckians out of work.

That's a staggering number. The fact that we're here today discussing a measure that will provide Americans with nearly 2 years' worth of unemployment benefits is yet another sign of the failure of this administration's stimulus plan to create jobs. Nothing establishes that more clearly than the economic trends in States like the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Since February, 2009, when the stimulus law was signed, almost 38,000 Kentuckians have been added to the unemployment rolls, and the unemployment rate has surged from 9.3 percent in February, to 11.1 percent today.

Over the past year, nearly 123,000 Kentuckians have claimed emergency unemployment benefits after their traditional benefit allowances expired. Every week, between 800 and 1,200 Kentucky residents are running out of unemployment benefits.

Earlier this month, Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear sent a letter to the Kentucky delegation stating that the loss of unemployment benefits would be devastating to many families. It will only sink Kentucky further behind in the race toward economic recovery. State and Federal unemployment accounts are already drained, and we are headed for more than \$100 billion deficits in these supposed "trust funds" by the end of 2010, with \$200 billion deficits by the end of 2012.

All of that spending will come at a huge price, which could require a doubling or more of State payroll taxes and possibly Federal tax hikes as well. Payroll tax hikes mean a tax on jobs—and ultimately on job creation—which brings us back to the real point: jobs.

In February, the administration promised its stimulus plan would create 3.5 million jobs. We're still waiting. While the administration claims to have "created or saved" 1 million jobs, in the real world, Americans have witnessed the continued destruction of 3 million jobs since the beginning of this year.

The administration promised with its stimulus bill that national unemployment would not exceed 8 percent. It's now 9.7 percent nationally, and the President has said he now expects it to exceed 10 percent by the end of the year.

Earlier this month, Larry Summers, Chair of the President's National Economic Council, said that the level of

unemployment is unacceptably high and will remain so for a number of years.

It's time to provide much needed help and assistance to millions of Americans who are struggling in States with outrageous unemployment rates. They should not be made to suffer for the failure of this administration's policies that have failed to create the promised jobs.

I support these extended benefits in H.R. 3548 to help long-term unemployed workers in Kentucky and other States where jobs are hardest to find. But we need to move beyond this secondary debate to the primary task of creating jobs, instead of undermining job creation. Until we do that, we're missing the point. What Americans want are jobs, not handouts from the government. But that's sure not what they're getting right now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. I yield 1 minute to the majority leader, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman from Washington, the Chair of the subcommittee, for yielding. I thank Mr. DAVIS for his support in facilitating this coming to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, 8 months into the 111th Congress and the Obama Presidency, it's clear to me, and I think others, that the economic policies that we've put in place are helping to pull our country out of the recession.

This month, the Blue Chip economic survey confirmed that 81 percent of leading economists believe that the recession is over. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke recently stated that he agrees.

Nonpartisan economic analysts agree that the actions taken by the Obama administration and our Congress, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, were critical to stabilizing our economy and putting us back on a path to recovery.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, Moody's, and the Council of Economic Advisers all concluded that our economy has approximately 1 million more jobs than it would have had if the Recovery Act had not been passed.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found that the Recovery Act kept 6 million Americans from falling below the poverty line and reduced the severity of poverty for 33 million Americans.

Whether we're Republicans or Democrats, those are results we can all cheer because they mean economic security to the people we represent.

However, Mr. Speaker, it's clear to all of us that unemployment remains a problem for millions of American families. The headlines may say that our recession is over; but for those individuals who remain out of work, this is still a time of hardship and struggle.

According to the CBO, it has also become clear that the hole we are climbing out of was deeper than we knew.

Now we know that the economy was in even worse shape than economists realized when President Obama took office in January.

Though unemployment continues to strain families in all of our districts, job losses have been steadily decreasing the last 3 months under this administration, with last month's figures the best in over a year.

But while job losses are slowing, it will take some time before we can reverse the losses that economists agree began nearly 2 years ago and start creating enough jobs for people who have been out of work.

Long-term unemployment, Mr. Speaker, remains at its highest rate since we began measuring in 1948. Over 33 percent of the total unemployed have been out of work for more than 26 weeks, thereby requiring this legislation.

Even as our country emerges from an economic crisis, hundreds of thousands of Americans and their families face a more personal crisis. At the end of this month, if we do not act, their unemployment insurance will run out, even though they continue to look for work. Many of these workers are middle class Americans. Many of them lost their jobs without notice.

According to a recent unemployment survey conducted by the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers: "Six in 10 of those whose employer had let them go had no advanced warning, adding to the pain for many. Nearly four in 10 said they had been employed by their company for more than 3 years and one in 10 for more than a decade."

In other words, Americans who had what they thought were stable jobs—and made commitments based on these jobs, like mortgages, college payments, auto payments—found themselves out of work without warning, leaving them and their families in dire straits.

For their sake, this bill extends for up to 13 weeks the unemployment benefits of more than 300,000 American workers. Our fellow citizens, through no fault of their own, find themselves without a job, without a livelihood, without a way to support themselves and their families.

I know that some argue that unemployment insurance can be an incentive not to seek a job at all. But that argument doesn't hold water for the workers who are the target of this bill: workers in the States with unemployment rates over 8.5 percent, the States in which an honest effort to find work is most likely to be frustrating.

We chose to target those workers who are still having difficulty finding a job, not because they're failing to give their best effort, but because the economic climate of their State is still difficult.

Very frankly, Mr. Speaker, my State will not qualify. That's the good news. But for those unemployed, the bad news, perhaps. But not only is supporting job-seeking workers the right

thing to do; extending unemployment insurance benefits all of us. That's because the money provided is quickly spent on necessities, which provides an immediate boost to local economies.

Mr. Speaker, an extension of unemployment insurance is supported by a bipartisan coalition of Governors, who understand its benefits for their economies and their families. They write that the unemployment benefits have "offered relief each month to struggling families across the country and have played a critical role in stabilizing the economy," and that these benefits, they say, must be extended. I would also add that because this bill is fully paid for, it doesn't add to the deficit.

In 8 months, we have come a long way, a long way in recovering from the recession inherited by this administration. But we cannot forget, we must not forget those whom the recovery has not yet reached, which is why I urge my colleagues to support this important bill, and why I thank Mr. McDERMOTT and Mr. DAVIS for their leadership in bringing this bill to the floor in an appropriate time frame so that we can get relief to those people before their benefits run out.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I will insert in the RECORD a recent article about an innovative and bipartisan Georgia program designed to help unemployed workers get back on the job quickly. The program is called Georgia Works. It allows unemployed workers to go to work for selected businesses for up to 24 hours a week for 8 weeks.

Unemployment benefits serve as the workers' salaries and the State pays an additional stipend of up to \$300 a month to cover child care, transportation, and related work costs.

Employers win because they get to test out qualified workers they might hire. Workers get a solid foot in the door to a new job and maintain and build work skills. And taxpayers get lower taxes in the form of shorter unemployment benefits and a quicker return to work.

This is a win-win program that other States would do well to replicate to help workers get back to work more quickly.

GA. WORK PROGRAM GROWS, ATTRACTS FOLLOWERS

(By Christine Vestal)

As states struggle to help legions of jobless workers find employment, some are seeking advice from Georgia, where a growing number of people are landing jobs as a result of free tryouts sponsored by the state unemployment system. The program, dubbed Georgia Works, is so simple that experts say other states should have no problem replicating it.

"It's a brilliant little program. There's no cost to the employer and the only cost to the state is a small stipend for transportation," said Don Peitersen, workforce director for the American Institute for Full Employment, which advises states on employment issues. "I go out and actively recruit states to recreate the Georgia model," he said. Officials from at least 15 states have told Georgia's labor department they are considering the option.

Started in 2003, Georgia Works allows people collecting unemployment benefits to work for selected businesses up to 24 hours a week for eight weeks at no cost to the employers. When not working, unemployment recipients are expected to search for other jobs.

Unemployment benefit checks serve as the workers' salaries and the state pays for workers' compensation insurance when needed. The state also gives job seekers as much as \$240 to cover child-care, transportation or clothing costs—a stipend slated to increase to \$300 this month.

All employers have to do is certify that they intend to immediately hire for the position and follow up with a performance evaluation, whether they hire the worker or not.

Georgia considers the program valuable on-the-job training, but unlike other training programs, it is not federally funded under the Workforce Investment Act. As a result, Georgia Works is open to all job seekers, not just low-income, disabled or dislocated workers who qualify under federal rules. In addition, there is no need for participating companies to fill out reams of paper to be certified. In Georgia, no legislation was required to launch the unique program.

Critics argue that the unemployment insurance system that funds Georgia Works was not intended to help businesses create jobs, but federal officials say they approve. "It's an innovative program and it's a good one. We think it's a plus all the way around," said the U.S. Department of Labor's southeastern director Pete Fleming.

Under the program, job seekers get a chance to show employers their skills and businesses can test prospective workers before hiring them. So far, more than 3,000 Georgians have landed permanent jobs through the program.

With the recession creating a much larger pool of unemployed workers, Labor Commissioner Michael L. Thurmond aims to quadruple that number over the next year. "Stimulus job creation is not sustainable. Georgia's economy will not rebound unless we jump-start private-sector hiring," Thurmond told Stateline.org.

He said plans are under way to make Georgia Works the state's lead re-employment strategy by aggressively recruiting businesses to get on board and offering job try-out options to every job seeker.

In its six years of operation, Georgia's program has grown primarily through word of mouth, with some job applicants proposing it to prospective employers as a way to get their foot in the door. Successful job seekers have also recommended Georgia Works to unemployed friends, and workforce agencies have proposed it to a small number of businesses and unemployment recipients.

Under the expansion, Thurmond says the state will post signs saying "Ask me about Georgia Works" at all workforce centers, frontline staff will offer the option in initial interviews with job seekers, and a marketing campaign will target some 6,000 small- and medium-sized businesses across a broad spectrum of industries, including retail, hospitality, construction, manufacturing, transportation and public utilities.

In the process, Thurmond says, the program will help struggling companies get back on their feet and start hiring.

As in the rest of the nation, layoffs have subsided in Georgia, but thousands of jobs remain unfilled, in part because employers are uncertain about their economic future. Even as the number of jobless workers soared to nearly 15 million nationwide last month, some 2.6 million jobs remained open, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

By taking some of the risk and expense out of hiring, Thurmond says Georgia can leverage unemployment trust fund dollars to stimulate job growth. Instead of simply serving as income support, benefit checks become a job seeker's investment in new employment and an opportunity for companies to lower the cost of hiring and training. "That's two for the price of one," Thurmond said.

But advocates for workers say the unemployment trust fund was not designed to subsidize jobs. Instead, the insurance is intended to support people while they search for the best possible work. "I don't buy the idea that pushing unemployed workers to fill just any opening is better than searching for a suitable job," said Andrew Stettner, deputy director of the National Employment Law Center, which advocates for workers.

Still, some workers say they would rather get back to work quickly than live with the uncertainty and frustration of a drawn-out job search.

Randall Crenshaw was one of those people. At 41, he lost his job of 22 years last January at hair-products company Goody Products, in Columbus, Ga. After two months of job searching, he said, "I was in shock because I was used to getting up and going to work every morning." So, when his adviser at the employment center suggested he enter the Georgia Works program, Crenshaw jumped at the opportunity.

"There were about 50 of us in the room when he invited us to stay after class if we were interested in hearing more about the program. Only two or three people took him up on it. So many people got up and walked out. I was just amazed by that," Crenshaw said.

Acknowledging the program is not for everyone, Thurmond says the soon-to-be announced expansion will set a goal of enrolling 10 percent of the state's approximately 200,000 jobless workers. With the program's historic success rate of placing more than 60 percent of participants in permanent positions, the program should result in new jobs for some 12,000 unemployed workers.

Crenshaw got the job he tried out for at a home health-care company in Columbus, and his salary of \$35,000 is only \$2,500 less than he was making in his last job. He said he'd recommend Georgia Works to anyone.

According to data from the state's department of labor, Georgia Works has helped lower the average amount of time it takes jobless workers to find new employment, reducing the draw on the trust fund by \$6 million. After program expenses, including worker's compensation insurance and stipends, the net savings as of March 2009 was \$3.7 million.

The U.S. Department of Labor maintains state-by-state data on the average length of time unemployed workers remain on benefits, but allows states to set their own rules limiting the number of weeks each worker can receive a check. While experts consider average duration of benefits a measure of state performance in helping people find work, the availability of jobs is a bigger factor.

Georgia currently requires participants in the Georgia Works program to have at least 14 weeks of state unemployment benefits left. That way, if they land a job during the eight-week trial, it will save the state money on benefits. But Thurmond says he plans to broaden the program to include people closer to the end of their state benefits and those already on federally funded extensions. In addition, the trial period may be shortened to six weeks, since most companies hire applicants they like in the fourth to sixth week, so they won't take a job somewhere else.

Although stanching the drain on the unemployment trust fund is still a goal, Thurmond said he is more concerned about spurring private-sector hiring and reviving the state's economy.

Georgia has been cited by two organizations—UWC Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers' Compensation and the American Institute for Full Employment—for its innovative approach to helping people on unemployment benefits find work.

"We're in an unprecedented job market so it's a unique opportunity to see if we can make this work," Thurmond said. "Often-times in government you have to step back and recalibrate. It's not so much a new idea, but an improvement on a good one. We're flying this airplane while we build it."

The biggest objection Thurmond said he hears from other states and potential business partners is that the program sounds "too good to be true." It involves scant paper work and a minimal investment.

But simple, low-cost ideas are often the best. "One of the great strengths of the unemployment insurance system is that states provide 50 separate incubators of innovation and change," Fleming of the labor department said.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. It is vital this bill be before us, and I congratulate our chairman and our ranking member for bringing it here. They and our leader have outlined the facts: almost 125 million unemployed, the highest since 1939, and about one-third have been long-term unemployed 6 months or more. In August, 27 States saw their unemployment rates increase, and 42 States saw losses in jobs.

So I urge we have three alternatives. We can say to the millions who are unemployed: get looking; get lost; or you're getting some help.

Get looking. They're looking. They're looking. It's a requirement of unemployment comp.

I want to read something that was said over the phone to us this morning. A gentleman by the name of Larry Szpanelewski from Madison Heights, Michigan, out of work since May of 2008. He has 10 weeks of benefits left, and if we don't extend it, he'll exhaust those benefits before the end of the year.

This was taken down by my office: "You know, I never thought this would happen to me. I have never been unemployed before. This economy is unlike anything I could ever imagine. I am very grateful for each extension of benefits. But I really want to get back to work. There is this misconception that people like me are sitting back and waiting for the next unemployment check. I really, really want to get back to work. I want to get back to doing my part and earning a paycheck. This unemployment is agony; it really is. I'm just waiting for the right phone call, Come to work."

□ 1600

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Michigan has expired.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 additional minute to the gentleman.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you. And I will repeat what he said to conclude, I am just waiting for the right phone call, Come to work.

So I don't think this first alternative, "get looking," applies. He, like millions of others, are looking. Six for every job. I don't think we can say to Larry Szpanelewski or the millions of others, "Get lost." That is not this country. So what we're saying today is, You're going to be getting some help. You've worked for it. He worked 20 years, a steelworker, and I think never unemployed before. I'm glad this is bipartisan. This needs a bipartisan response in the best traditions of this House and in the best traditions of our beloved country.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman MCDERMOTT for yielding. I also want to commend him and the ranking member for expeditiously getting this legislation to the floor. Mr. Speaker, when President Obama took office, we were in the middle of an economic recession which showed itself for real in December of 2007. Notwithstanding economic recovery activities, stimulus activities, green initiatives and other efforts that are beginning to take hold, we still hear the song. And I turned my radio on just the other day, and I heard a song from probably the seventies that said, Every morning about this time, she bring my breakfast to the bed crying, get a job.

It said, When I read the papers, I read it through and through, trying to see if there is any work for me to do.

Unfortunately for many people, there is no work for them to do at the moment, but we know that the time is coming. But in the meantime, they need help. And the help that we can give them today is the help of knowing that their unemployment benefits are extended. That's the very least that we can do while we continue to work to try to make sure that our economy re-groups, re-energizes itself so that that song does not have to be played, "Get a Job."

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. So if Mr. DAVIS wants to speak to end, and I will speak, we will be done.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my opening statement, I truly urge support for H.R. 3548, to extend benefits to help long-term un-

employed workers in States with the highest unemployment rates, which include my home State of Kentucky. We also need to redouble our efforts to focus on the task of creating jobs, especially like those that would be coming from allowing Americans to take an all-of-the-above energy policy to create jobs across the board. As our Democratic majority leader in the State House says, If we were to do that, we could have a third industrial revolution across the heartland.

What Americans really want are jobs, not handouts. Even as we help those in places where jobs are the hardest to find, promoting job growth should be our broader goal and our number one priority as we move forward in this Congress.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the minority on the subcommittee for being supportive of bringing this bill out here. We did not go through some of the usual procedures. We brought it out straight to the floor. I think that their cooperation should be recognized because it is a reflection of the fact that everybody in this House cares about the American people. We all want people to have a job, and we want them to have some way to sustain themselves until this economy begins to open up again.

One of the interesting things about this period in our economic history, as has been pointed out by some economists, there have been three real recessions. One was 1930, and in that recession, many workers never returned to the work they did before. Rather than going back to the farms, they moved to the cities, and that was a major shift in what was happening. In the 1980 recession, many workers were able to go back to the work that they had done before. The question that our country faces right now is: Will we be able to go back to what we had before, or will we create a new economy? And I think that this bill will give us a chance to get the industries, the new industries, the green industries and so forth, up and running so that we can return people to gainful employment.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, with record 12.2 percent unemployment, Oregon has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. That translates into 236,000 Oregonians without work. In the Portland region, nearly 140,000 residents are out of work. For those without work, the average weekly unemployment benefit in Oregon is \$310. Each week, I receive letters indicating how much of a lifeline these unemployment benefits are.

Tragically for many families, this benefit is running out. Without this legislation, 6,000 Oregonians will have exhausted their unemployment benefits by the end of September. Each week thereafter 500 more will lose their coverage. Unless we authorize this extension, federal aid for these Oregonians will end.

The economic losses from unemployment will last long after these workers—and the millions like them around the country—have

again found work. Income losses for workers who are let go in a recession can persist for as long as two decades, sometimes longer. During this recession, older workers' wages will likely fall farther than those of younger workers. Those without college degrees will likely do worse than those with.

These challenging economic conditions are only the tip of an economic iceberg. The typical American household made less money last year than the typical household made a full decade ago. Median household income fell to \$50,303 last year; in 1998, the median income was \$51,295. With six job seekers for every opening, these numbers are not likely to improve soon. Every year, our constituents have to do more with less.

Every day in America jobs are being created and jobs are being lost. The real question is the balance between job growth and job loss. Since 1940, Republicans have been in charge of the United States more years than Democrats, 36–33. But, despite that fact, in terms of actual job creation, you can go back and look at the Department of Labor's statistics, for those 33 years, Democrats created 64.2 percent of the jobs in this country. Republicans were responsible for 35.8 percent of the jobs.

The Obama administration has inherited the worst financial collapse in American history since the Great Depression, with the effects that are still being felt on the State and local level and will continue to ripple throughout the economy even after it is corrected. In response, President Obama produced a strong economic recovery package that the Congress passed in a few days. The current credit crisis facing the United States is one of the greatest economic challenges that the country has faced. It can be squarely traced to the ideology of economic deregulation, which left the government with few tools to address the reckless actions of many financial institutions until too late.

It is time to rebuild the foundations of our economy, to improve America's fiscal fitness. I'm proud that the Recovery Act has begun this process. I look forward to working with my colleagues to invest in good jobs, improve wages, and create a nation where every family is safe, healthy, and economically secure.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3548, the "Unemployment Compensation Extension Act." This bill will provide much-needed relief to the millions of unemployed American workers who are struggling to find jobs today. With the adoption of this bill, Congress will provide up to 13 additional weeks of desperately needed unemployment benefits to workers who are about to run out of unemployment benefits, particularly focusing on those people who live in states where unemployment rates are highest.

California has the 4th highest unemployment rate in the Nation and in terms of my district the numbers are staggering:

Carson—12.6 percent
Compton—20.9 percent
Long Beach—13.7 percent
Signal Hill—9.4 percent

Mr. Speaker, although job losses have begun to decline more recently, unemployment is still too high, and the American people need relief now. With the national unemployment rate at 9.7 percent, we must enact legislation that will assist the American people during this precarious economic time of availability at an all-time low. At least 300,000 will

run out of their unemployment benefits by the end of September and over 1 million people will run out of their benefits by the end of December.

It is very important that we pass H.R. 3548, but let us not forget that our real task in the coming months is to ensure that every American that wants a job has one. I have been working in Congress to continue to create and pass meaningful reform that will spur job growth and help communities in crisis. One of the most powerful pieces of legislation that we have already passed is the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act, which helped create and save 3.5 million American jobs.

The American people are struggling to make ends meet while they search for new jobs in this challenging economy. I urge my colleagues to support this necessary and timely legislation. If we do not pass this bill, we will not only face a financial crisis but a moral deficit in this country as well. We cannot allow that to happen. I urge all members to vote "aye" on H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3548—the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009. In light of the devastating impact the recession has had on families and communities across the country, this legislation is critical to ensure that jobless workers continue to collect unemployment benefits while they rebuild their lives and try to find gainful employment. This is a very important bill, and I commend Representative JIM MCDERMOTT for bringing this measure before the floor.

Although Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke announced last week that the recession is very likely over, he and other members of the Obama administration caution that unemployment may continue to rise before we start to see significant job creation next year. And today, many people across the country remain jobless and are relying on their unemployment benefits to support their families.

Unless Congress acts, over 300,000 jobless workers living in high unemployment states are projected to exhaust their unemployment benefits by the end of September. California is ranked among the states leading in double digit unemployment rates. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, as of August 2009, California's unemployment rate reached 12.2 percent. Moreover, the Department of Labor reports the state has lost well over 700,000 jobs over the past year.

I have received countless distressing calls and letters from my constituents. I have heard horror stories about foreclosed homes, displaced families, and even death due to unforeseen illness because of an inability to pay for medical care. These stories give a face to the statistics.

This recession has been particularly devastating on communities of color. The unemployment rate for African Americans is 15.1 percent, and for our Hispanics and Latinos, the rate is 13.1 percent. When you consider the nationwide unemployment rate is 9.7 percent, our minority communities are clearly fairsing far worse. These communities are in desperate need for further assistance as provided under this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to add my voice of support for H.R. 3548. And I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to ensure that our Federal government's eco-

nomc recovery programs are effective and actually achieve their intended goals.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my strong support for H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009.

The unemployment rate in my state of Illinois is 10 percent. Illinois' unemployment rate is higher than the national average of 9.6 percent; and within Illinois, the rate in the Chicago area is higher still, at 10.6 percent.

It is true that there are signs the economy is beginning to recover: fewer jobs were lost in August than in previous months. But we still have a long way to go in terms of job creation, and in the meantime, we need to help those who are looking for work but can't find it.

Three hundred thousand Illinoisans have lost their jobs in the last year. Five million Americans have been out of work longer than six months. The bill before us would extend an additional 13 weeks of unemployment compensation for those individuals in high unemployment states who are exhausting their unemployment benefits. With nearly six people out of work for every available job, this assistance is imperative.

H.R. 3548 would help at least 20,000 Illinoisans who are exhausting their benefits by the end of September and more than 50,000 whose benefits would otherwise expire by the end of the year.

Extending unemployment compensation will help job-hunting Americans pay their bills and prevent more foreclosures, further bolstering the economy. According to Mark Zandi, chief economist of Moody's Economy.com, every \$1 spent on unemployment benefits generates \$1.63 in new economic demand.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3548.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, this legislation would extend unemployment benefits to as long as 21 months in States where the unemployment rate is 8.5 percent or higher. That's about half the country, and the number is likely to grow.

And we aren't even close to the end of the road. On September 11, 2009, Larry Summers, chair of the President's National Economic Council, said today's level of unemployment is "unacceptably high" and will remain so "for a number of years." How high? Today's unemployment rate is 9.7 percent. The Administration's August Midsession Review foresees 10 percent at the end of 2009, 9.7 percent in late 2010, and 8.0 percent in late 2011.

It's highly unlikely Congress will stop paying extended benefits then. We need to ask how long can this go on, and what does any of this have to do with helping people get back to work? Since this extended benefits program was created in June 2008 and expanded twice, unemployment rose from 5.8 to 6.8 to 7.6 to now 9.7 percent, even though the Administration swore it wouldn't exceed 8 percent under their stimulus law. There are now 6 million more unemployed, including 3 million more long-term unemployed, than when this program was created.

We are perpetuating unemployment, not solving it. Larry Summers also has stated that unemployment benefits "contribute to long-term unemployment . . . by providing an incentive, and the means, not to work. Each unemployed person has a 'reservation wage'—the minimum wage he or she insists on getting

before accepting a job. Unemployment insurance and other social assistance programs increase that reservation wage, causing an unemployed person to remain unemployed longer.”

A senior Labor official in the Clinton administration reflected on what that meant in terms of when unemployed workers find new jobs: “There are large spikes in the escape rate from unemployment at 26 weeks and at 39 weeks for UI recipients. Spikes of similar magnitude at 26 and 39 weeks are not apparent for UI non-recipients.” What happens after 26 and 39 weeks of unemployment? State and Federal unemployment benefits end, and there are “large spikes” in people finding new jobs.

Is ending a long spell of unemployment easy? Of course not. Does everyone quickly find a job? Unfortunately not. Do those who return to work always make what they did before? No. But government cannot solve all ills, and sometimes makes things worse by trying to. Recent articles have noted that a majority of the unemployed are willing to take a pay cut to get back to work, that “there is a huge traveling workforce that follows the jobs,” and that States have innovative options to get unemployed workers back on the job.

But extending benefits to 21 months undermines those return to work incentives, leaving workers worse off, and employment prospects more depressed going forward.

Just currently approved unemployment spending has drained the State and Federal unemployment accounts, and will lead to deficits totaling more than \$100 billion by late 2010 and nearly \$200 billion by late 2012. Further extensions and expansions will add massively to that tide of red ink. That undermines job creation by requiring even more massive tax hikes to pay for all the continued benefit spending. Already State unemployment taxes are poised to double in the coming years. Extending benefits even more will require even greater job-killing tax hikes, hurting especially the long-term unemployed we are trying to help.

We can and must do better. It's well past time for us to review how we can really increase jobs so laid off workers get paychecks, not unemployment checks.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the 300,000 workers who will lose unemployment benefits by the end of the month if we do not act.

The economic crisis that President Obama and this Congress inherited has caused unemployment to spike throughout the country. Competition for jobs is intense, with six jobless workers for each new job. The result is that an estimated 50 percent of unemployed individuals have been jobless for more than 6 months. The Unemployment Insurance system has done a good job of helping families make ends meet during the recession, but we must protect those who still cannot find work and whose benefits are about to run out.

The Unemployment Compensation Extension Act (H.R. 3548) would provide immediate relief to millions of workers by extending unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks in states with high unemployment rates. In my state, California, the unemployment rate is at 12.2 percent—a 70 year high. If Congress does not act, nearly 70,000 Californians will run out of benefits by the end of this month and a total of 154,000 Californians will exhaust benefits by the end of the year. In

total, 1 million workers around the country will exhaust benefits by the end of the year. We cannot allow that to happen. While the economy begins to recover and the economic stimulus starts to take hold, Congress has an obligation to ensure that families can put food on their tables and pay their bills.

I am a co-sponsor of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act and I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong and full support of H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009. This legislation is sorely needed in my home State of Michigan and I urge all of my colleagues to lend their support.

This legislation comes before the House at a critical time for many of our families. By the end of this month more than 300,000 jobless workers are expected to run out of unemployment compensation. The National Employment Law Project estimates that by the end of the year nearly 1.5 million workers will have used up their benefits. In Michigan it is expected that more than 62,000 will run out of their benefits by the end of December.

For the families that I represent this loss of benefits comes at a time when Michigan is continuing to struggle with over 15 percent unemployment. In the metro Detroit area unemployment is even higher at 17.1 percent unemployment. These are not families looking for a handout, rather they are relying on these benefits to pay their mortgage and put dinner on the table. I can think of thousands of workers in my district alone who can confirm that \$310 a week does not stretch far.

Although it is easy to lose sight of an individual family in the crowded pages of statistics and multi-colored graphs we use to try to quantify unemployment in this country, hearing the thousands of stories of my constituents struggling to stay afloat in these still-difficult times is enough to argue the necessity of this bill. One of those stories was told to me by a man named Dave from Taylor. Dave is 58 years old, but is unable to retire due to both a lengthy period of unemployment as well as being a victim of identity theft. He moved back to Michigan to be close to his daughter, but still struggles to find work despite, in his words, “trying just about everything.” Folks like Dave are not simply sitting around and idly hoping for a job. They are actively searching every day and we must give them more time to do so.

Another story highlighting the need for this extension was told to me by a man who introduced himself as Will at the Southeast Michigan Rehiring, Retraining, and Relief Fair I hosted in early September. Will was a Senior Information Technology Project Manager with GM for 19 years, but despite a great deal of time and effort to both network and go through traditional channels, he continues to struggle to find employment. Although Will is following leads on jobs he discussed with recruiters at the job fair, his situation is emblematic of the displaced auto workers from all sectors of the industry who will likely require retraining to find a new job as well as the continued unemployment benefits throughout that process to support themselves and their families.

Under this legislation States that have a three-month average of total unemployment rate of 8.5 percent will be eligible for up to 13 weeks of extended unemployment benefits.

This would bring the total amount of potential Emergency Unemployment Compensation to 46 weeks for 29 States.

The additional 13 weeks of benefits included in this legislation is far from being enough to solve the problem of unemployment, however, it will provide some peace of mind for our families and give our workers additional time for their job search. And with six people looking for each available job, we know that this extension will be valuable.

For those that doubt the need for this extension, consider that both Moody's Economy.com and the Congressional Budget Office have found that such an extension is an effective economic stimulus. For every dollar of unemployment benefits, \$1.64 is provided in economic stimulus.

Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of this legislation and as the federal representative for the State with the highest unemployment, I urge all of my colleagues to express their support for this extension and vote in favor of H.R. 3548. Please do not let Congress's holiday gift to our families in need be the exhaustion of their unemployment benefits.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation to temporarily extend unemployment insurance benefits.

Unemployment rates remain historically high. However, we are beginning to see signs of economic recovery. Though the August 2009 jobs report announced that 216,000 jobs were lost, it was the fewest jobs losses in a year. We are seeing rebounds in the housing and stock markets. The gross domestic product is stabilizing. It is becoming increasingly clear that the Recovery Act that Congress passed earlier this year prevented a severe economic collapse and is a success by putting money back into the economy, creating jobs, and providing tax relief to 95 percent of Americans. While this economic progress is welcome news, much work remains to be done in rebuilding our economy.

Too many Americans remain out of work at no fault of their own. They are still struggling to make ends meet. If we do not act to extend unemployment benefits, thousands of American workers will run out of unemployment compensation by the end of September, and over one million will exhaust benefits by the end of the year. These benefits help workers who have lost their jobs to buy basic necessities for their families as well as continue their mortgage payments.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to help those in need during this economic recovery. I urge my colleagues to support this much-needed legislation.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of an emergency extension of unemployment benefits for states with high rates of unemployment like my home state of New Jersey.

I hear all the time from Central New Jersey residents who are working hard each day to find a new job. Recently, a Mercer County resident wrote me to say his wife had been out of work for 11 months. He wrote to say, “The jobs are just not available for her to go back to work.” This bill answers his plea and the pleas of countless other out of work New Jersey residents to extend unemployment benefits while they continue to search for employment.

In tough economic times, Congress and the President have worked together to extend unemployment benefits when needed. The previous extensions of unemployment insurance during this current recession has helped many New Jersey residents keep a roof over their head and food on the table when times were tough. In this tight job market and with the economy just starting to show signs of recovery, there are still six unemployed workers for each job opening and more than five million people who have been unemployed for more than six months.

The Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009, H.R. 3548, would extend an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals who have exhausted their current benefits in states with unemployment rates above 8.5 percent. With New Jersey's unemployment rate at 9.4 percent, by the end of September it is estimated that 22,000 New Jerseyans will have exhausted their unemployment benefits and have nowhere else to turn. This bill will provide them with direct relief during a difficult time.

Our government must help those in need as they seek new work. Morally, it is the right thing to do and the economists tell us that unemployment benefits are one of the most cost-efficient and fast-acting forms of economic stimulus.

The bill does not add to the deficit, by offsetting its cost with a one year extension of an employment tax that has been in place for 30 years.

Once this bill is signed into law it is estimated that by December, this 13-week extension of unemployment would benefit 1 million Americans—including 42,000 New Jersey residents—who will be looking for work and have exhausted their existing unemployment benefits.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009, which will provide an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals in states with unemployment rates of 8.5 percent or higher. This bill provides a critical boost to the many Rhode Islanders, and Americans across the nation, who are struggling to find employment. In order to receive these benefits, workers must have lost a job through no fault of their own, be actively searching for a job, be able to work, and must have worked twenty weeks prior to being laid off. Only unemployed workers who become eligible for the additional weeks of benefits before January 1, 2010, will qualify for this extension.

I am encouraged by reports that our country's recession is easing, but that is little consolation to the many people still suffering in my home state. In Rhode Island, the unemployment rate has reached 12.8 percent, which is the third highest rate in the country. It is also estimated that nearly 4,500 Rhode Islanders will exhaust their benefits before the end of this year. With recent reports estimating that there are six job seekers for every job opening, Congress must act to help workers through this challenging time.

I understand the hardships Rhode Islanders are facing, and that is why rebuilding our economy is the top priority for me and this Congress. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has saved the jobs of teachers, police officers, and nurses across our state and has created jobs through new highway

and infrastructure projects, with more coming online in the next few months. I am also pleased to see that the programs we have passed are being turned into smart investments in our future, such as the creation of clean energy jobs in our state through weatherization and offshore wind development.

As the President has stated, it may take some time before we see significant improvements in our unemployment rate, but I am confident that the programs we are putting into place will yield results over the next several months, while the longer-term investments we're making will ensure that our workforce and our job market are stronger in the years to come. While unemployment benefits and stimulus programs help jumpstart our economy in the short term, Congress must also work to build a new foundation for a lasting recovery. That is why we are making much needed reforms to our health care and financial systems and investing in our education and workforce training systems.

As Members of Congress, we have the power to give hard-working Americans another chance to continue their job search and provide for their families. I encourage my colleagues to pass this bill to help those who are most vulnerable during these trying times.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and thank Chairman McDERMOTT for his leadership on this bill. H.R. 3548 provides an extension of unemployment benefits for up to 13 weeks for Americans across the country in states with the highest unemployment rates.

As of August 2009, the unemployment rate in America is a staggering 9.7 percent. Jobs are continuing to be shipped overseas, with the manufacturing sector boasting the biggest losses. Over 216,000 jobs were lost just last month. Ohio is one of 15 states with an unemployment rate above the national average and the Economic Policy Institute is projecting that racial disparities in high unemployment states will continue to worsen in 2010.

In recent weeks, I have received numerous calls from constituents who have already run out of unemployment benefits or are on the verge of doing so. This legislation provides a critical, if temporary fix to their problems.

Twenty-nine states currently qualify for the 13 week unemployment extension under this legislation, with more states sure to follow suit. I strongly support this legislation and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. McDERMOTT. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3548, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 324, SANTA CRUZ VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-263) on the resolution (H. Res. 760) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 324) to establish the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

House Resolution 441, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2971, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3548, by the yeas and nays.

Proceedings on H.R. 2215 and House Concurrent Resolution 163 will resume later in the week.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

HONORING CATHOLIC SISTERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 441, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 441, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 412, nays 0, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 720]

YEAS—412

Ackerman
Aderholt

Adler (NJ)
Akin

Alexander
Altmire