



The 47th Flyer

News for California's 47th Congressional District
from Congressman Alan Lowenthal



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January 10, 2014

Happy New Year! Now that the second session of the 113th Congress is back in full swing, I am excited to be back working to serve the 47th District.

My hope is that with this new year comes a more bipartisan environment in the halls of Congress, one that is conducive to passing critical legislation needed to move our country forward. Such legislation must include renewing unemployment insurance for the 1.3 million Americans who saw their benefits end on January 1, 2014, passing comprehensive immigration reform, passing a long-term budget, and returning Congress' focus to creating jobs and growing the economy.

THE NEED TO EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

When we extend unemployment insurance (UI), the U.S. economy goes up and poverty goes down. Sadly, as of December 28th, UI benefits for 1.3 million Americans ended due to Congress' failure to pass an extension. In addition, another 325,800 unemployed Californians will lose their benefits in the first six months of 2014. However, Congress has the power to ensure that none of the above happens.

On Wednesday, the Senate voted to proceed with debating a bill that would extend UI benefits for three months, and I hope the House will vote on the Senate bill if and when it passes to provide protection to those 1.3 million Americans who are at risk of having to choose between paying rent and electricity bills or putting food on the table.

Shortly after the Senate voted to continue debate, I cosigned a letter along with Congressman Dan Kildee and other members of the freshman Democratic class to House Speaker Boehner urging him to immediately allow a House vote on extending UI benefits.

To continue the momentum to protect the long-term unemployed, I also joined U.S. Reps. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ), Jon Runyan (R-NJ), and Tom Reed (R-NY) in introducing legislation that would incentivize businesses to hire qualified individuals that have been out of work for 27 weeks or more.

“AMERICAN UNEMPLOYED WORKER INVESTMENT ACT”

As I mentioned, Congress adjourned without extending unemployment benefits to the millions of Americans who will lose them this year; and, this must be one of our top priorities in the second session of the 113th Congress. That is why I have introduced a practical solution that will create private sector incentives for hiring out-of-work Americans. The “American Unemployed Worker Investment Act” is such a solution.

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Will expanding unemployment insurance to the 1.3 million Americans who lost their benefits at the start of the year benefit our economy?

Yes - They will be able to spend that money on food, bills, and rent as they continue their job search - which will, in turn, stimulate the economy.

Maybe - Congress must first pass legislation that extends unemployment benefits, then we will see what the economic impact will be.

No - It will cause people to lose their motivation to find a job.

I don't know

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If my bill is enacted, small businesses with 10-25 full-time employees would be able to qualify for a \$4,000 per employee tax credit for up to two years under the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). To qualify, the recently hired unemployed employees must be kept on payroll for at least one year, working at least 35 hours per week. Businesses must also show a net increase of at least 1 new employee per year in order to qualify for each credit.

This new tax credit is an investment in our small businesses and an investment in millions of unemployed Americans. The more Congress is able to focus on empowering small businesses to hire, the more we will be able to transition Americans off unemployment benefits, while creating thousands of jobs and saving millions of tax payer dollars.

CONGRESS U – EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

How do “Extended Unemployment Benefits” differ from regular unemployment benefits?

Unemployment insurance (UI) benefits are intended to serve as temporary financial assistance to unemployed workers who meet the requirements of State law; and, Extended Unemployment Benefits (EUB) are available to workers who have exhausted regular UI benefits during periods of high unemployment. The basic EUB program, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and each respective State, provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits when a State is experiencing high unemployment. Many States, including California, fall into this category.

Eligibility for unemployment insurance, benefit amounts, and the length of time benefits are available are determined by the State law under which unemployment insurance claims are established. To learn more about Extended Unemployment Benefits, visit:
[http://www.edd.ca.gov/unemployment/FAQ -
Extended Unemployment Benefits.htm](http://www.edd.ca.gov/unemployment/FAQ_-_Extended_Unemployment_Benefits.htm).

Thank you,



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