

On February 9, 2011, Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Congressman Bobby Scott introduced H.R. 589, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Expansion Act of 2011. To read the bill and track it's progress, please visit <http://thomas.loc.gov/> .

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Expansion Act do?

This bill would extend unemployment compensation to individuals by adding an additional 14 weeks of benefits to the existing Tier I of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program (EUC08), the temporary federal program first created in 2008 as a response to the most recent recession. This bill also extends the expiration date of federal unemployment benefits from June 2, 2012 to September 22, 2012.

Who is eligible to receive these benefits if the bill passes?

Unemployed persons who lost their job through no fault of their own are eligible to receive emergency unemployment compensation. Unemployed persons who are currently unemployed or who have exhausted his or her entitlement to all available unemployment insurance benefits would be eligible to receive 14 more weeks.

Why is this bill needed?

This bill is needed to successfully climb out of an economic recession which has left us with an alarmingly high unemployment rate and help the unemployed people find a job. Currently, for every job opening, there are 4.4 unemployed individuals. As of February 2011, the national unemployment rate is 9%, which means 13.9 million people are currently unemployed. Additionally, 6.2 million people are long-term unemployed. In the state of California, the unemployment rate is 12.5%, among the highest in the country. Millions of people across the country have been put out of work through no fault of their own and they need the basic social services to help them recover from the economic recession and help contribute to economic growth.

How does extending unemployment benefits help stimulate the economy?

Unemployed persons spend the little money they have on immediate necessities to get by and that spending stimulates the economy and contributes to job growth. Former Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), Peter Orszag, echoed the same sentiment in congressional testimony on the weak economy in 2009 and stated that increasing the value or duration of unemployment benefits is an effective route toward economic growth.

Who supports this bill? Does it have bipartisan support?

Reps. Barbara Lee and Bobby Scott have reached out to ALL members of Congress.

How much does the bill cost?

The Congressional Budget Office has not released an estimate yet, however, rough predictions estimate \$16 billion, approximately a quarter of the money saved in extending the Bush tax cuts

for individuals who make \$200,000 or more.

Does the bill automatically pass once Lee and Scott introduce it?

No. After a bill is proposed it is given a bill number and referred to the appropriate House committee by the Speaker of the House or the presiding officer. The committee would then have to consider the bill and vote in favor of it before it moves to the floor for the entire House membership to vote.