

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Barbara Lee, Chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressman Robert C. “Bobby” Scott introduced legislation to provide an expansion of unemployment benefits that will assist those Americans who have exhausted their benefits. This benefit will be available to all unemployed persons, regardless of the unemployment conditions in their state.

“The economic downturn has been devastating for all of us – however, it has been particularly devastating for those who for the past two years have been out of work known as the 99'ers,” said Congresswoman Barbara Lee. “While the tax plan that was signed by the President today will provide additional unemployment benefits for many Americans, the 99'ers were left out of that bill. That is why it is important that we put in place a safety net for those still looking for work. We cannot and will not allow our fellow Americans to fall by the wayside. Congressman Scott and I plan to continue to push for passage of this legislation because it is simply the right thing to do.”

“Unfortunately, the Congressional Black Caucus’s alternative which would have provided this needed assistance was not considered on the House floor last night,” said Rep. Scott. “Instead the House passed a package that adds almost \$900 billion to the nation’s deficit but does little to help those Americans who are chronically unemployed. This legislation will assist those who have exhausted their benefits by adding an additional 14 weeks of benefits. Not only does this legislation help people who are struggling to find work and make ends meet, it provides direct stimulus to the economy, as these benefits are turned around quickly and injected back in the economy. ”

Provisions of the bill include:

- This section provides 14 additional weeks of emergency unemployment compensation in Tier I.
  
- This additional benefit will be available for those who have exhausted all their benefits (99ers and other exhaustees) as well as those who will be unemployed this year.
  
- This expansion is similar to the expansion in November 2009 which provided an additional week of benefits to Tier II.

- Adding these extra weeks in Tier I makes them available for all chronically unemployed and not only those currently collecting unemployment benefits from a “high unemployment state”.

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