



Senate passes crucial hurdle to extend unemployment: Relief is coming for thousands of struggling Ohio families

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After weeks of waiting and three failed attempts, today the bill to extend unemployment benefits (H.R. 4213) passed a crucial hurdle in the Senate. The bill will allow American workers who have lost their jobs to receive up to 99 weeks of federal unemployment benefits through November, rather than the usual 26 weeks. The extension is retroactive, so unemployment coverage will resume for the 98,000 Ohioans who already exhausted their benefits as a result of the delay in Congressional action.

The extension of unemployment provides much needed relief for the hundreds of thousands of Ohioans without a job and an important boost to Ohio's economy. Economists have shown that programs like Unemployment Insurance, where recipients are especially likely to spend any extra funds right away within their communities, are the most effective at stimulating the economy. Through the end of May, \$1.38 billion came to Ohio's workers from the extra weeks of unemployment.

The final measure includes an extension of only part of the additional benefits for workers who lost their jobs in the recent recession that were originally included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The \$25 per week in additional benefits to all unemployed workers has expired. This provision put \$520 million into the pockets of unemployed Ohioans through the end of June.

Cloture on H.R. 4213 passed by a vote of 60-40. After final Senate approval, the measure will return to the House for consideration and is expected to be signed by the President by the end of the week.

For more information on benefits unemployed Ohioans receive as a result of ARRA, see the July edition of *Planning and Action* available at www.communitysolutions.com.

The Center for Community Solutions is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization focused on policy and system reform. It provides strategic leadership to improve health, social, and economic conditions.

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