

## Congressman Rothman Votes to Extend Unemployment Benefits for Laid-Off Workers Still Seeking Jobs in a Tough Economy

(Washington, DC) — Today, Congressman Steve Rothman (D — NJ) voted to extend unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks to those workers still seeking work in a very tough job market. H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Act of 2009, will continue to provide relief in the form of unemployment benefits to the millions of unemployed workers across the country, as they struggle to find work. The Act passed the U.S. House of Representatives 331 to 83.

“While job losses declined in August, there are still tens of thousands of hard-working New Jerseyans who are looking for work and who will lose the lifeline of their unemployment benefits if we do not extend help,” said Rothman. “In New Jersey, we have one of the highest unemployment rates in the country with over 22,000 workers who will lose their benefits by the end of September without this action by Congress. This extension will ensure that those workers will be able to continue providing for their families — helping to pay for groceries, filling their cars with gas and making their mortgage payments on time.”

This extension is targeted to those states with particularly high unemployment (with a three-month average total unemployment rate (TUR) of 8.5 percent, or a 13-week insured unemployment rate (IUR) above 6 percent), where it is more difficult for people to find new jobs.

This 13-week extension, if approved by the Senate, would be the fourth time Congress has extended the benefits since the recent economic crisis began. It would bring the total period of federal assistance for unemployed Americans in the hardest-hit states to 46 weeks, the longest time for which the government has provided such benefits.

The bill will not add to the federal deficit. Instead it is paid for by the continuation of the federal unemployment tax for an additional year, a tax that has been in place for more than 30 years. And it requires better reporting on newly hired employees (start date) to reduce unemployment insurance overpayments.

The extension will also provide immediate stimulation to the local economy. The Congressional Budget Office has cited unemployment benefits as one of the most cost-effective forms of economic stimulus, and every dollar spent on unemployment benefits generates \$1.63 in new demand, according to Moody’s chief economist Mark Zandi.

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