

Rothman Statement On Congress Approval of Unemployment Benefits

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Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today issued the following statement following the U.S. House of Representatives' approval of a measure that would provide a 13 week extension of federal unemployment benefits, providing financial relief to approximately 135,000 jobless New Jersey residents.

Today, I voted for a measure, which President Bush has now signed into law, that will provide a 13 week extension of federal unemployment benefits for approximately 135,000 jobless New Jersey residents, including those whose extended benefits were cutoff on December 28th.

I know full well that New Jersey's unemployed desperately want to find a job that will help them put food on the table, purchase clothing for their children, pay their home mortgage, and bring financial stability back into their lives. The job market out there is tough and this measure will help while these people continue to search for a job.

For all of the good that this measure accomplishes, it does fall short of what this Congress can do to help our country's unemployed. The Republican leaders in the House would not allow Democrats to offer a measure, which I supported, that would have provided approximately 47,800 additional New Jersey residents with unemployment benefits. It would have aided the people who have been out of work the longest and are desperate for assistance as they continue to look for work in this very weak economy.

Because Republicans left us with no choice but to support or oppose only the scaled down unemployment benefit, I voted for the measure despite the fact that I want us to do more. I will continue to push for the more comprehensive unemployment measure to be voted on again so that we may provide further relief to New Jersey's unemployed.

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[Go back](#)

