

REP. DAVIS JOINS EFFORT TO EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

WASHINGTON, DC (DECEMBER 7, 2011) - REP. DAVIS JOINS REP. LEVIN, RANKING MEMBER OF WAYS AND MEANS IN A SPECIAL ORDER SUPPORTING EXTENDING UNEMPLOYEMENT BENEFITS

Davis issues the following statement on the floor of the House

"It is December 7th and Republicans still have not enacted legislation to protect the millions of Americans hardest hit by one of the worst economic crises in our nation's history. The well-being of 6 million Americans - including 100,000 from my home state of Illinois - hangs in the balance. Our nation is in an unemployment crisis, and we must act now to help our citizens.

At this time last year, Republicans emphasized that the economy was so horrible that the wealthiest Americans needed TWO YEARS of tax cuts, yet they only saw the need to help the unemployed for ONE YEAR of emergency assistance. Now, one year later as that emergency assistance runs out, Republicans remain comfortable with \$180 billion in tax breaks for the wealthiest 3% of Americans, but they cannot support \$50 billion in 2012 to help millions of the neediest Americans - and never mind any consideration of helping the millions of Americans who have exhausted their federal benefits and still can't find a job.

Our nation is in an unemployment crisis:

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Over 45% of all unemployed workers - more than 6 million people - have been out of work for more than 6 months.

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There are approximately 6.4 million fewer jobs now than at the beginning of the Great Recession, the Department of Labor data show that there are over 4.2 unemployed Americans for every job.

Even if every job was filled, 8.9 million citizens would remain unemployed.

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During this protracted storm of economic hardship, unemployment Benefits are a critical lifeline for our citizens and our economy:

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Unemployment benefits have kept 3.2 million Americans (including nearly 1 million children) from falling into poverty in 2010 alone.

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New research shows that the current federal UI programs provide \$2 in economic stimulus for every \$1 in unemployment benefits circulating in the economy.

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The federal unemployment programs saved or created 1.1 million jobs as of the fourth quarter of 2009 alone, and the Economic Policy Institute estimates that preventing unemployment benefits from expiring could prevent the loss of over 500,000 jobs.

Our nation is in an unemployment crisis, and we must act now to help our citizens. We cannot protect the wealthy while ignoring the millions of Americans hardest hit by one of the worst economic crises in our nation's history. We cannot deliver a windfall to the privilege and deny the poor. Such a position is not responsible leadership. Such a position is not consistent with American values. I join with my colleagues in urging the Republican Leadership to protect vulnerable Americans by extending current unemployment benefits."