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## **JOBS REPORT: ECONOMY SLOWLY IMPROVES, BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED**

Washington, DC—The economy added 171,000 jobs in October, and the unemployment rate ticked up to 7.9 percent, according to the monthly jobs report released Friday by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. More than half-a-million people returned to the labor force, and job growth for August and September was revised upward by a total of 84,000.

"Despite real signs of recovery, the unemployment crisis remains deep and punishing for millions of Americans," said Christine Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project. "We still have a lot of work to do before we'll have enough jobs for everyone who needs them. Long-term unemployment is pushing Americans into new extremes of poverty and economic insecurity—and dramatically decreasing the chance they will ever recover."

And things could soon get worse. The federal unemployment insurance program for job seekers out of work six months or longer is set to expire by the end of the year. If Congress fails to renew it, unemployment insurance will be cut off for more than two million long-term unemployed Americans between Christmas and New Year's. Almost a million more will lose jobless aid in the first three months of 2013, so that by April, some three million Americans will be without the crucial bridge to a job that unemployment insurance provides.

An abrupt expiration of the federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation program comes as long-term unemployment remains near record levels. It would leave the unemployed with no further jobless aid beyond the 26 weeks provided by most states, even though the average unemployed worker is out of work for 40 weeks, and there are more than three unemployed workers for every one job opening.

Many job seekers are stretched to the limit financially, having exhausted their savings, retirement, and any other resources once available to them. And unless Congress renews the EUC program before it expires in December, more than two out of three unemployed individuals could enter 2013 without any income support whatsoever.

"Hurricane Sandy showed us that when we put partisanship aside in a crisis situation, we can tackle real problems. Even as the economy recovers, long-term unemployment is still a crisis. Between now and December, we need Congress and the president to work together, step up and extend federal unemployment insurance so the millions of Americans still struggling with long-term job loss can continue looking for work," said Owens. "We cannot allow political brinksmanship around the fiscal cliff to push the families of the long-term unemployed off a huge financial cliff. But that's what will happen if Washington doesn't put politics aside

and act in the best interests of these workers, their families, and our economy by renewing the federal unemployment insurance program."

"We need to keep federal unemployment insurance in place for job seekers who need it most, as part of a comprehensive plan to put the economy back on track," Owens said. "Federal unemployment insurance goes to Americans who've been out of work the longest and need it the most. It's a key part of any realistic plan to get America's economy moving and the least we can do for those who have been hurt the most."

*The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research, education and advocacy on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers. For more about NELP, visit [www.nelp.org](http://www.nelp.org).*

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