

For Immediate Release: November 14, 2013

Contact: Emma Stieglitz, emmaS@berlinrosen.com, (646) 200-5307

White House Calls for Federal Jobless Aid Reauthorization

Top Economic Official Sees “Good Chance” of Passage in Congress by December 31st Deadline

Washington, DC—With federal jobless aid for the long-term unemployed set to expire at the end of December, the White House today announced its support for reauthorizing the program through 2014. At a public forum, the director of the White House’s National Economic Council, Gene Sperling, stated, “With an unemployment rate of 7.3 percent, we need to raise the emergency unemployment insurance and push for extensions to 2014,” reported the MNI news service. Sperling noted that he sees a “good chance” Congress would pass the measure, reported MNI.

“We applaud the White House for its commitment to maintaining the support that long-term unemployed workers need by extending the federal unemployment insurance program,” said **Christine Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project**. “Unemployment remains unacceptably high, the labor market is persistently weak, and long-term unemployment remains at crisis levels. Lawmakers in Washington must renew federal unemployment insurance for 2014, and should do so without delay or brinksmanship.”

More than two million long-term unemployed workers will lose jobless aid by the end of March 2014 if Congress fails to reauthorize the federally-funded Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program by December 31st, according to a National Employment Law Project [report](#). That total consists of 1.3 million workers currently receiving federal EUC who will be abruptly cut off in the week between Christmas and New Year’s, and an additional 850,000 workers who will run out of state unemployment insurance in the first three months of 2014, with no access to federal EUC if Congress fails to act.

The number and share of jobless workers who are considered long-term unemployed remain near record highs: 4.1 million job-seekers, or 36.1 percent of all the unemployed, remain out of work for six months or more.

Federal unemployment insurance constitutes the nation’s central and most targeted policy response to the long-term unemployment crisis, and its impact on families on the economic edge and their communities is profound. Unemployment insurance benefits kept 1.7 million people above the poverty line in 2012.

The federal unemployment insurance program is one of the most effective forms of economic stimulus; it boosts spending in the economy and thereby creates jobs. A recent study by the [Economic Policy Institute](#) found that renewing the EUC program through 2014 would generate spending that would support 310,000 jobs—jobs that will be lost if EUC is shut down.

Federal unemployment insurance kicks in after unemployed workers run out of state jobless aid, which typically ends at 26 weeks. But with nearly half of jobless workers still looking for work after their state aid ends, a failure to renew federal EUC would leave these unemployed job-seekers without the modicum of income support they rely on to feed their families, keep the lights on at home, and heat their houses in winter.

The National Employment Law Project is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocates on issues affecting low-wage and unemployed workers. For more about NELP, visit www.nelp.org.

###