



## CONGRESS MUST NOT LEAVE ANY WOUNDED AMERICAN WORKER ON THE ECONOMIC BATTLEFIELD

If the First Infantry suffered 9 percent wounded, while the Second Infantry suffered “only” 7.9 percent, sending medicine to the First Infantry, but not the Second, would make no sense. Every wounded soldier deserves help. And, if the Second Infantry is bigger than the First, sending help to the Second would be even more important to the strength of the army. Yet, HR 3404 (McDermott) and S 1647 (Reed) propose to trigger an additional 13 weeks of critically important Emergency Unemployment Compensation for unemployed American workers based upon state unemployment rates. Unemployed workers in 28 states, including Texas, would not get help because of state rates below the trigger. This approach is unfair to American workers and counterproductive for the national economy. Congress should help workers in all states equally.

### Congress Should Extend EUC

In response to the recession, Congress provided help for unemployed workers by creating the Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program in July 2008 and extending it the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) through 2009. With nearly a half-million unemployed workers exhausting all state and federal UI benefits by the end of September, and another million by December, Congress urgently needs to extend EUC through 2010. HR 3404 and S 1647 propose providing an additional 13 weeks of EUC for states with unemployment rates at 9 (House) or 8.5 (Senate) percent. The National Employment Law Project provided an [analysis](#) on August 20 explaining why Congress needs urgently to act on these bills. Triggering help on an individual state’s unemployment rates as the bills propose, however, is unfair and counterproductive.

### Using State Rates is Unfair

The size of the gap between job seekers and available jobs in individual states does not justify making a distinction between workers in each state. When the smoke clears, whatever proportion of the First Infantry that got hit compared to the Second makes no difference to the soldiers who took bullets. Just as each wounded soldier deserves help, each unemployed American worker deserves

EUC. Congress should provide equal protection to all American workers.

### Using State Rates is Counterproductive

And triggering help on a state’s unemployment rate is counterproductive to fostering a national recovery. Rhode Island’s unemployment rate is 12.7 percent; yet Rhode Island has only 0.5 percent of the nation’s unemployed. Texas’ unemployment rate is 7.9 percent; but Texas has 6.56 percent of the nation’s unemployed. In fact, the 28 states whose unemployed would not get additional EUC under the proposed legislation have *one-third* of all the nation’s unemployed workers.

Right now more than 422,000 Texans are receiving UI benefits. Under the proposed legislation, those who cannot find a job before the end of the year will not receive the additional 13 weeks of EUC because the Texas unemployment rate is unlikely to reach the 9 percent trigger until well into 2010. Texas, New York (5.78% of the nation’s unemployed), and Pennsylvania (3.73% of the nation’s unemployed) are the three states with the greatest share of unemployed workers who would not be helped by the proposed legislation. Congress needs urgently to extend EUC, but Congress should act uniformly to be fair to all workers and to foster a national recovery.