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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN NEVADA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, right now, thousands of Nevadans have the full-time job of looking for work. It has gotten worse for many since December 28 of last year, when emergency unemployment insurance benefits for many expired.

There are now over 2 million Americans, Mr. Speaker, who have been cut off from unemployment insurance because of Congress' failure to act. That includes 26,023 Nevadans. These are not numbers; these are real people.

Every week that Congress fails to act, it is projected that an additional 842 Nevadans will lose their benefits each week during the first half of 2014.

Nevada's economy has lost over \$54 million because Congress has stalled; but I, along with many of my colleagues, have not forgotten about our constituents.

Today, Democrats will sign a discharge petition to force Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republicans to bring up a bill to extend unemployment benefits for all Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

These benefits are used to put food on the table, to put gas in the car, so that they can go look for an interview and to pay for rent. Extending these unemployment benefits used to be bipartisan.

On December 14, 2002, in his weekly radio address, then-President George W. Bush scolded Congress, saying, "No final bill was sent to me extending unemployment benefits for about 750,000 Americans whose benefits will expire on December 28."

He went on to say, "These Americans rely on their unemployment benefits to pay for the mortgage or rent, food, and other critical bills. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down."

The unemployment rate in December 2002 had just hit 6 percent. Congress then extended unemployment benefits by a vote of 416-4. If it was an emergency then, it is an emergency now. It is time to do the right thing and extend unemployment insurance benefits for Americans.

It is an emergency for my constituents, like Alfordeen, who I met at a local Workforce Connection center as she searched for work.

It is an emergency for Monty, who recently signed up for Medicaid be-

cause of the Affordable Care Act. He is homeless now; and because Congress failed to act, his unemployment insurance has been cut.

It is an emergency for Tamika, who I brought as my guest to the State of the Union. She is an electrician, and she knows what it means to work hard, but has fallen on hard times and can't find work.

The Nevadans on unemployment insurance that I meet are scrambling to make ends meet, and no one wants to live on unemployment insurance; and no, Mr. Speaker, they are not lazy.

Despite repeated Democratic efforts, Republicans in Congress refuse to listen and have callously rejected restoring this vital economic lifeline that serves as a financial bridge for those who are looking for work, so this discharge petition is an extraordinary step.

But for my constituents, there is no time for politics, and there is no time for waiting. Action to create jobs and build an economy that works for everyone must start with renewing unemployment insurance benefits for those Americans who were laid off at no fault of their own. It is time to extend unemployment insurance now.

I encourage the Speaker, after this discharge petition is signed by Members, to bring up a vote so that we can provide this important lifeline to 2 million Americans, 26,000 Nevadans, families, and veterans who desperately need this benefit.

REPAY SUPPLIES ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, every day, teachers across our Nation reach into their own pockets to pay for classroom supplies like books, software, and pencils, without ever being reimbursed by their schools; and since 2002, teachers could at least count on a \$250 above-the-line tax deduction to help defray the cost of these purchases.

But at the end of last year, this tax deduction was allowed to expire, meaning that teachers are not able to claim it on their individual returns this tax season or count on it next year, as they continue to purchase supplies for their classrooms and their students.

The REPAY Supplies Act, introduced by CAROL SHEA-PORTER and cosponsored by more than 50 of our colleagues from both parties, aims to fix this problem and make the educator expense deduction permanent.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER and I were disappointed to learn that this modest deduction was not included in the recent tax reform proposals, and we will send a letter in the coming days to ask that a hearing on the REPAY Supplies Act be held as soon as possible.

I hope that my colleagues will join us in signing this letter to the Ways and Means Committee and give teachers

the opportunity to testify before Congress about the impact the deduction has had on their checkbooks and on their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I am a former Florida-certified teacher, and I know how important it is that students come to school prepared and ready to learn; but without the basic supplies needed to take part in lessons, students are put at a disadvantage in the classroom, forced to rely on outdated materials, and without essential learning tools, and too often, teachers go into their own pockets to make up the difference.

For many educators, teaching is more than a full-time job. They arrive at the school while many of us are still getting ready for work. They stay late into the evening. They prepare lesson plans, grade papers, and deal with parents and grandparents, like us, who can admittedly be a handful when guaranteeing that their child is receiving the best education possible.

Teachers care deeply about their students and are often willing to sacrifice personal needs in order to provide them with the best learning experience possible. According to the latest status of the American public school teacher report by the National Education Association, educators are spending approximately \$477 per year on basic school supplies for their students and their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, we all want the best for our children. We work hard every day in this Congress to make sure that our children have a bright future; and education, we know, is a key to this success, an essential component of that brighter future that we are trying to create for the next generation.

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But it doesn't seem to make a whole lot of sense that we are hamstringing the very people we have entrusted with their education. Teachers are giving up their own time and money to help students learn and be engaged in school. The least we can do is to provide them with this modest \$250 deduction to help mitigate the financial and personal sacrifices that they are already making.

Every 2 years since 2002, Congress has come together in a bipartisan manner to extend this deduction on behalf of our country's educators. By making this tax deduction permanent, Congress can give teachers certainty that at least some of their purchases will be paid back, that it will improve access to essential learning materials, and that it will give our educators the recognition they deserve.

I urge Members to join Ms. SHEA-PORTER and me in this fight, and I look forward to working with all of us to ensure that our Nation's teachers and our children have the education and the tools necessary to succeed.

PERSONALIZE YOUR CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from