

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2872

To amend title III of the Social Security Act to extend reemployment services and eligibility assessments to all claimants for unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 14, 2019

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. Kaine, and Mr. PORTMAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend title III of the Social Security Act to extend reemployment services and eligibility assessments to all claimants for unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Building on Reemploy-
5 ment Improvements to Deliver Good Employment for
6 Workers Act” or the “BRIDGE for Workers Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public
2 Law 115–123) improved program accountability for
3 effectively serving unemployed workers and made a
4 significant new investment in reemployment services.

5 (2) Research shows the longer workers are out
6 of work, the harder it can be to maintain their skills,
7 professional network, and stable home life.

8 (3) Reemployment services give workers who
9 might otherwise struggle to find new jobs the tools
10 that they need to get back to work—such as individ-
11 ualized career counseling and job search help as well
12 as local labor market information—and they can
13 serve as an entry point to the workforce development
14 system.

15 (4) Reemployment services have been dem-
16 onstrated to reduce the number of weeks that pro-
17 gram participants receive unemployment benefits by
18 improving their employment outcomes, including
19 earnings.

20 (5) Unemployment benefits replace less than
21 half of working income, on average, so workers who
22 find new jobs quickly suffer less financial hardship.

23 (6) Combining targeted reemployment services
24 with unemployment benefits helps keep people at-

1 tached to the labor force who might otherwise be-
2 come discouraged and drop out.

3 (7) The Congressional Budget Office estimates
4 that, over time, investments in reemployment serv-
5 ices create savings for taxpayers and unemployment
6 trust funds by reducing spending on unemployment
7 benefits.

8 (8) Many different types of workers can benefit
9 from reemployment services. Reemployment services
10 should be used to shorten the duration of unemploy-
11 ment for workers even if they are not projected to
12 fully exhaust their unemployment benefits.

13 **SEC. 3. ELIGIBILITY FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES.**

14 Section 306(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
15 506(a)) is amended—

16 (1) by striking “individuals referred to reem-
17 ployment services as described in section 303(j)”
18 and inserting “claimants for unemployment com-
19 pensation, including claimants referred to reemploy-
20 ment services as described in section 303(j),”; and

21 (2) by striking “such individuals” and inserting
22 “such claimants”.

○