



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS®**

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EDWIN D. HILL
International President

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International
Secretary-Treasurer

June 30, 2010

Dear Senator or Representative:

On behalf of the approximately 725,000 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), I write in support of the *Restoration of Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act* (H.R. 5618), a bill to continue federal unemployment programs through November 30, 2010. Federal unemployment extension programs expired on June 2nd. Since then approximately 1.2 million Americans have lost their unemployment benefits. Absent Congressional action more than two million will run out of jobless benefits by July 10th.

Please be informed approximately half of IBEW members are construction electricians and telecommunication installer/technicians. Of this group 25 to 30 percent are out-of-work through no fault of their own. Worse, some IBEW construction locals are reporting unemployment rates above 50 percent. Unemployment Insurance (UI) has been a lifeline to IBEW families providing substantial assistance during this, the worst recession since the Great Depression.

However, as I have written to you before, extending jobless assistance is about more than the unemployed. As documented by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, UI is one of the most significant and efficient economic stimulus programs ever instituted by the federal government. Every dollar in UI assistance provides \$1.90 in economic activity and is expected to create 800,000 jobs in 2010.

Unfortunately, some in Congress have shown more concern for the federal deficit than unemployed Americans. Abandoning the unemployed will not help cure the deficit, it will only add to the breadth and depth of the recession. In 1937, amid growing concerns with our nation's deficit, Congress pulled back on federal spending resulting in a recession within the Great Depression. Failure to renew UI extensions could result in a double-dip recession.

Millions of Americans remain unemployed and unfortunately, the pace of economic recovery is expected to remain slow. I urge Congress to pass H.R. 5618, legislation to assist the economy and unemployed Americans.

Sincerely yours,

Edwin D. Hill
International President

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