



# Wisconsin Legislature

---

February 5, 2010

**To the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation and Sen. Max Baucus:**

We are writing to ask for your leadership in getting Congressional approval for extension of unemployment insurance benefits and COBRA premium assistance through December 31, 2010.

Without this extension, 104,000 Wisconsinites will lose their benefits by the end of April, 2010. The job market has not rebounded. Statewide, the unemployment rate was 8.7 percent in December, up 3.2 percent from a year ago, and it is worse in most other states.

Wisconsin lost 26,100 jobs between November and December. The unemployment rate is 16 percent in Beloit, 15 percent in Racine, and 12 percent in Wausau and West Bend. In 69 of Wisconsin's 72 counties, the jobless rate went up between November and December, with dozens of counties at more than 10 percent.

As we are sure you hear every day, people are hurting. They are worried about keeping a roof over their heads and food on the table. Many families have depleted their savings. Other governmental and non-profit safety nets have been stretched thin by the recession and cannot absorb 104,000 people losing this income.

COBRA premium assistance is also critical because coverage under COBRA is unaffordable for most families without this premium support. Health insurance coverage can give these families an assurance that an illness or injury will not lead to bankruptcy.

Immediate action is necessary to ensure there is little or no interruption in this critical safety net. Even a small delay in payments can be disastrous for people currently depending on these benefits.

Thank you for your leadership on this matter.

Sincerely,

JUDITH B. ROBSON  
SENATOR

MIKE SHERIDAN  
ASSEMBLY SPEAKER

CHUCK BENELECT  
REPRESENTATIVE

KIM HIXSON  
REPRESENTATIVE

JON ERPENBACH  
SENATOR

TED ZIGMUNT  
REPRESENTATIVE

CHRISTINE SINICKI  
REPRESENTATIVE

MARK MILLER  
SENATOR

BOB ZIEGELBAUER  
REPRESENTATIVE

SANDY PASCH  
REPRESENTATIVE

TERESE BERCEAU  
REPRESENTATIVE

NICK MILROY  
REPRESENTATIVE

BOB WIRCH  
SENATOR

JENNIFER SHILLING  
REPRESENTATIVE

KATHLEEN VINEHOUT  
SENATOR

TERRY VAN AKKEREN  
REPRESENTATIVE

AMY SUE VRUWINK  
REPRESENTATIVE

ANN HRAYCHUCK  
REPRESENTATIVE

GORDON HINTZ  
REPRESENTATIVE

SPENCER BLACK  
REPRESENTATIVE

BOB TURNER  
REPRESENTATIVE

JIM SOLETSKI  
REPRESENTATIVE

PHIL GARTHWAITE  
REPRESENTATIVE

KRISTEN DEXTER  
REPRESENTATIVE

LENA TAYLOR  
SENATOR

MARY HUBLER  
REPRESENTATIVE

TIM CARPENTER  
SENATOR

JULIE LASSA  
SENATOR

LEON YOUNG  
REPRESENTATIVE

JOHN STEINBRINK  
REPRESENTATIVE