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AARP Praises Bipartisan Senate Passage, Urges House to Pass Emergency Unemployment Insurance Benefits Bill

Longer Unemployment and Age Discrimination Have Harmful Impact on Older Workers

Washington, DC –Today AARP applauded passage of a bipartisan agreement authored by U.S. Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Dean Heller (R-NV) to reauthorize emergency unemployment insurance (UI) benefits for long-term unemployed workers and urged the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the bill swiftly. Over the last 5 years, workers age 55 and older have experienced record levels of unemployment. On average, once older workers lose their jobs, they experience several months more of unemployment than younger workers.

“Since the great recession began, on average, older workers have a much harder time finding a new job, often due to age discrimination in hiring,” said **AARP Executive Vice President Nancy LeaMond**. “This bipartisan bill would help jobseekers struggling to make ends meet while they search for another job and we hope the House will work to pass it quickly. AARP also backs another **bipartisan bill**, the *Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act*, which would combat age discrimination and defend the rights of older individuals in the workplace.”

Age discrimination in hiring is a significant part of the reason why older jobseekers have a difficult time finding a new job. About one-third (34%) of older unemployed workers report that either they personally faced age discrimination in the last four years, or know someone who has. **Recent research** also shows that some employers discriminate against the unemployed, favoring those with less relevant experience but shorter spells of unemployment over those with better résumés who have been out of work for more than six months. Since older workers are overrepresented among the long-term unemployed, they are more adversely affected by this type of discrimination.

The Senate’s bipartisan vote comes over three months after UI benefits were cutoff on December 28, 2013, when Congress failed to reauthorize the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates 2.79 million Americans would be eligible for UI benefits under the plan advanced today by the Senate, which includes the 2.24 million who would see retroactive benefits going back to December 28.

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.

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