



June 11, 2008

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

Today, the House is expected to consider H.R. 5749, which would provide 13 weeks of extended unemployment benefits for jobless workers in every state, plus another 13 weeks of benefits for jobless workers in “high unemployment” states that have at least 6 percent unemployment. On Behalf of the 850,000 members of the United Steelworkers Union, I urge you to vote “YES” on this critical piece of legislation.

With the largest one-month increase in unemployment in the last 22 years reported on Friday (.5 percent increase to 5.5 percent in May), passage of this bill is absolutely necessary for the millions of American jobless workers, including USW members, who currently are out of work or are laid-off and have run out of unemployment benefits.

As our economy continues to spiral downward and payrolls in the public and private sectors decline, the cost of gas and overall cost of living continues to spiral upwards. We strongly urge Congress to extend this benefit for the workers who are hardest hit by our weakened economy. The number of jobless workers who have been unemployed for more than six months (1.55 million workers) has increased since Congress last enacted an extension on unemployment benefits. In fact, 37 percent of jobless workers are exhausting their regular state unemployment benefits without finding work.

Congress cannot turn its back on these men and women who are experiencing the adverse effects of our nation’s shaky economy. Once again, the USW urges you to vote “YES” on this piece of legislation that is critical to millions of America’s jobless workers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly R. Hart".

Holly R. Hart
Legislative Director

HRH/rdb

United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union

Legislative Department, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • 202-778-4384 • 202-293-5308 (Fax)

www.usw.org

UNION LABEL 3057