

February 11, 2014

Dear Mr. Danilow,

Thank you for taking the time to contact my office regarding federal unemployment benefits. I appreciate hearing your views on this issue.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC08) program began in July 2008. EUC08 provided four tiers of federally funded unemployment compensation beyond the traditional unemployment compensation (UC) paid for by employee-employer contributions (generally 26 weeks). Between this program and the permanent unemployment insurance program, total benefits provide an unemployed individual with up to 99 weeks of benefits, depending on the state. During the 112th Congress, Congress passed and I voted against P.L. 112-240, which extended this temporary program through 2013.

Under President Obama, workforce participation has hit its lowest level since the Carter Administration. I understand that many Americans are becoming discouraged about finding jobs. 11 million people are unemployed, and millions more have given up looking for work.

During the 113th Congress, there have been several proposals to continue expired unemployment benefit programs. The most recent debate, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act (S. 1845), would have extended the expired program for three months, allowing individuals to collect benefits beyond the traditional 26 weeks.

The priority of legislators should be to facilitate job creation. This means reducing regulatory burdens, keeping taxes low and allowing markets to operate without manipulation. For that reason, I proposed my Economic Freedom Zones Act of 2013 (S. 1782) as an amendment to the Unemployment Extension Compensation Act. My Economic Freedom Zones plan applies to most communities with unemployment higher than the national average and excess poverty. These zones will dramatically reduce taxes and red tape so families and businesses can grow and thrive and we can get communities back to work.

Due to the excessive spending and limited consideration of amendments throughout debate of S. 1845, when the time came for a vote, I did not support this bill.

Please know that as I serve the Commonwealth of Kentucky in the United States Senate, I will work to shrink the federal government and grow the private sector, in order to restore the health of our nation's economy.

Sincerely,



Rand Paul, MD
United States Senator