

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 6, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman, Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Reid and Chairman Baucus:

I write today to urge you to include a provision reinstating North Carolina's eligibility for the Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC08) program as part of any legislation extending EUC08 beyond December 31st, 2013. As you may be aware, unemployed workers in my state have been ineligible for EUC08 benefits since July 1st, 2013, through no fault of their own.

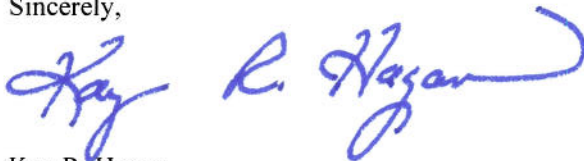
Earlier this year, the North Carolina General Assembly passed H.B. 4. This irresponsible legislation placed a severe burden on unemployed North Carolinians by significantly reducing the number of weeks for which state benefits are available, from 26 to as few as 12, among its numerous troublesome provisions. Most concerning in H.B. 4, however, are deep cuts to weekly benefit amounts for unemployed workers, which violated federal law and forced the state to terminate its participation in the EUC08 program – the only state in the nation to do so. As a result, approximately 170,000 North Carolinians are no longer able to receive federal unemployment insurance benefits they were promised in 2013. This has been devastating for the individuals and families who are already struggling to make ends meet in a tough economic climate.

Now that the Senate may consider an extension of EUC08 through 2014, I urge you to include a legislative provision reinstating North Carolina's participation in the program. North Carolina's unemployment rate continues to rank among the highest in the country, and I want to do everything possible to remedy the severely damaging impact of the state law. As unemployed North Carolinians try to get back on their feet, they should be able to rely on the same safety net as residents of other states, to which their federal tax dollars also contribute, and should not be disadvantaged by the reckless actions of the state legislature's leadership.

170,000 innocent North Carolinians have already fallen victim to the General Assembly's attack on the unemployed. Should the EUC08 program be extended beyond December 31st, 2013, I hope you will consider the thousands of additional North Carolinians who may be deprived of unemployment compensation benefits available to Americans in other states. I welcome the opportunity to work with you to address this issue as legislation extending EUC08 moves forward in the Senate.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,



Kay R. Hagan
United States Senator