



News for Immediate Release

June 17, 2011

Governor Corbett Signs Unemployment Benefit Extension, Reform Bill

Harrisburg – Governor Tom Corbett today signed into law Senate Bill 1030, a measure that will ensure the continuation of a federally funded, 13-week period of extended unemployment compensation benefits. Without prompt action by the governor and the General Assembly, approximately 45,000 claimants would have lost those benefits.

In addition to making the changes necessary for Pennsylvania to continue participating in the federal Extended Benefits Program, the new law also makes important reforms that will save Pennsylvania's unemployment compensation fund an estimated \$133 million annually.

"This legislation is a good and important step toward reforming our unemployment compensation law," Corbett said. "While these reforms will benefit employers and the workforce, there remains more to do, in the long-term, to restore the trust fund's solvency and repay our federal loans."

Specifically, Gov. Corbett said the new law will:

- Slow the growth of benefit costs by capping increases in the maximum weekly benefit, requiring those with large severance packages to exhaust severance pay before receiving UC benefits, and requiring claimants to demonstrate a stronger attachment to the workforce in order to qualify for benefits;
- Create a new shared-work program similar to laws in 21 other states allowing employers to avoid layoffs by reducing the hours of their workers who would receive pro-rated UC benefits for those lost work hours; and
- Require unemployed workers to search for work in order to receive UC benefits.

"I encourage all job seekers and employers to use the services available through the statewide, PA CareerLink® network," said Department of Labor & Industry acting Secretary Julia Hearthway. "Employment professionals in our PA CareerLink® offices can help you find job openings, apply for them and sharpen the skills necessary for returning to work or preparing for a new career."

Visit www.pacareerlink.state.pa.us to find the office nearest you.

The Department of Labor & Industry offers the following advice to Extended Benefits claimants:

- Extended Benefits claimants should file next week, starting on Sunday, as they normally would by mailing the claim form for the week ending June 18.
- Claimants with questions should visit www.uc.pa.gov online, or call the Unemployment Compensation Service Center at 1-888-313-7284. The service center is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Find the Department of Labor & Industry online at www.dli.state.pa.us.

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