The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
H232, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

December 11, 2013

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We write to urge you to address the looming expiration of unemployment benefits for millions of Americans before leaving for the year. Without swift Congressional action, 1.3 million jobless workers will have their benefits cut off on December 28th, and nearly another 1.9 million will lose their unemployment benefits over the first half of next year. This would not only be a devastating blow for millions of Americans who are already struggling, but it would also hurt our economy.

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program is scheduled to immediately and completely stop at the end of 2013, during the holiday season, with the last payable week ending on December 28th. All current EUC beneficiaries will lose their benefits, and individuals exhausting their limited state unemployment benefits will no longer be eligible for EUC benefits in 2014. This cutoff will affect over 3 million Americans over the next six months, and thereby also negatively impact our economic growth. In fact, recent estimates indicate that the expiration of the EUC program would cost our economy 310,000 jobs and drain roughly four-tenths of a percentage point from first-quarter economic growth.

While unemployment benefits remain a critical lifeline for dislocated workers and their families, these benefits have recently been significantly scaled back. According to the Congressional Research Service, the total amount of weeks of unemployment benefits has dropped by more than a third across the states, and by more than 50 percent in some states, compared to two years ago. Furthermore, the recipients have seen their weekly benefit payment provided by the EUC program cut under sequestration.

Even with the progress our economy has seen since the depths of the recession, there are still 1.3 million fewer jobs today than when the recession started six years ago. Additionally, approximately 4 million Americans are considered long-term unemployed, and have been looking for work for more than six months. Now is certainly not the time to further decimate vital federal assistance to workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own and who must actively seek work in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits. We therefore strongly urge you to immediately bring up a one-year extension of the current EUC program.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sander Levin  
Member of Congress  

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress  

Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Anna Eshoo
Member of Congress

Robert Brady
Member of Congress

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sanchez
Member of Congress

Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Janice Hahn
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

John B. Larson
Member of Congress

Dan Kildee
Member of Congress
Daniel B. Maffei  
Member of Congress

Andre Carson  
Member of Congress

Tammy Duckworth  
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

John C. Carney  
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress

Robin Kelly  
Member of Congress

Ron Barber  
Member of Congress

Susan A. Davis  
Member of Congress

Joe Garcia  
Member of Congress

William L. Owens  
Member of Congress

Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress

Pete Gallego  
Member of Congress

Adam Smith  
Member of Congress