In **MISSOURI, 33,400 Will Lose Unemployment Aid** on Jan. 1 Unless Congress Acts

UNLESS CONGRESS ACTS NOW, lifeline aid for nearly 2 million workers who have lost jobs will be cut off Dec. 31 as the extended unemployment insurance benefits expire. **In Missouri alone, 33,400 will lose unemployment benefits.** Over the course of 2012, an estimated 6 million U.S. workers struggling to find jobs will lose these essential benefits if Congress continues to focus on keeping tax cuts for the 1% who crashed our economy rather than helping the 99% by extending unemployment insurance.

If Congress fails to act, the impact on families, communities and our economy will be devastating.

The average weekly benefit for an unemployed worker on the federal extension is about $297, which amounts to only half of the income needed to cover the most basic necessities of food, housing and transportation, as measured by the annual Consumer Expenditure Survey. **In Missouri, the weekly benefit averages $241.04.**

While barely enough for a family's survival, unemployment aid also supports local economies in critical ways.

Unemployment benefits are pumped back into the economy immediately, flowing to local grocery stores, gas stations, landlords and utilities. **In Missouri, the loss to communities could total $8,050,736 a week.** Nationwide, the economy grows by $2 for every dollar spent on unemployment insurance.

With unemployment rampant, now is not the time for Congress to delay or play political games with the extension of unemployment aid.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN MISSOURI

Total*	8.5 percent
African Americans**	15.3 percent
Latinos**	13.5 percent
20- to 24-year-olds, all**	16.7 percent

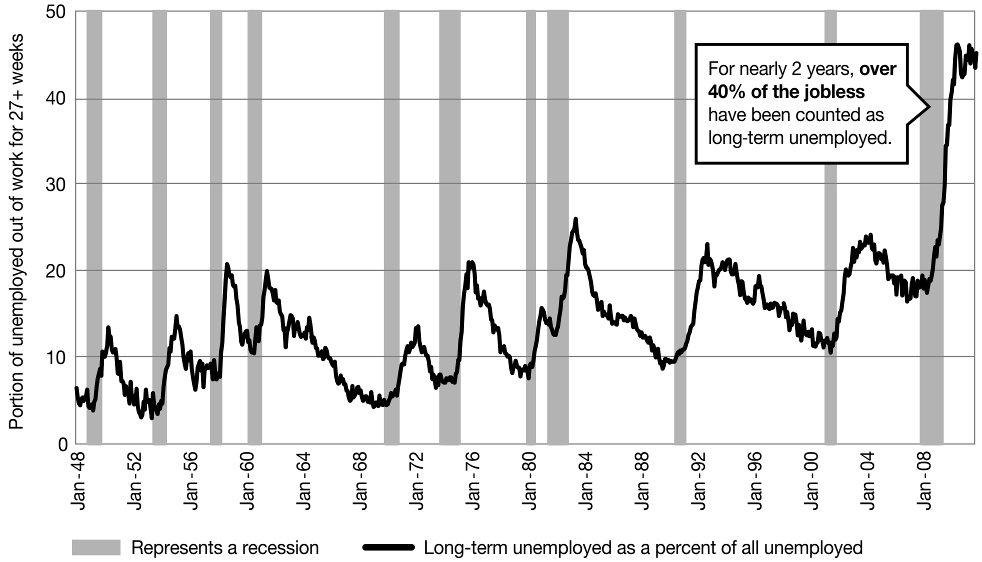
*October 2011
**2010 averages

Nationally, the unemployment rate has remained at or near 9 percent for almost two and a half years. **In Missouri, the rate is 8.5 percent; 2010 data (the most recent available by state) tell an even harsher story for African Americans: 15.3 percent; Latinos: 13.5 percent; and 20- to 24-year-olds: 16.7 percent.**

Not only are unemployment rates high, the duration of joblessness is tragic.

Nationally, nearly 45 percent of jobless workers—more than 6 million—have been jobless for six months or longer. That rate has been at or above 40 percent for almost two years—the longest period of such high persistent unemployment since 1948. The average length of joblessness is 40.5 weeks—more than nine months—which is nearly double the average duration of joblessness in June 2009, when the Great Recession officially ended.

LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT HAS AFFECTED LARGER PORTIONS OF UNEMPLOYED THAN EVER BEFORE, AND REMAINS ALARMINGLY HIGH



Unemployment is contributing to the national scourge of home foreclosures. In Missouri, 1 in 1,097 housing units are facing foreclosure actions.

Nationally, 8 percent of mortgage borrowers were at least a month behind on their mortgage payments in the third quarter of 2011 and 4.4 percent—more than 2 million loans—were in some stage of foreclosure.

Republican lawmakers have cruelly claimed long-term unemployment is due to "lazy" workers "taking advantage" of unemployment assistance.

All it takes is a look at the modest level of benefits and the fact there are more than four job seekers for every one opening to expose those claims as ridiculous and heartless.

Jobless workers should not pay the price for Wall Street's recklessness.

After 18 months—the longest slump since the Great Depression—our own Great Recession officially ended in Summer 2009. But for the 14 million Americans who are jobless and the 11.5 million who are underemployed or have given up looking for work, the recession goes on.

The bursting of the housing bubble and related Wall Street recklessness drove us into this recession, but working families bearing the cost and the loss of about 6.5 million jobs since the recession started now also face the cut-off of survival benefits. As a Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations report concluded, the Great Recession **"was the result of high-risk, complex financial products; undisclosed conflicts of interest; and the failure of regulators, the credit rating agencies and the market itself to rein in the excesses of Wall Street."**

SOURCES:

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