

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

Basham Press Release

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Basham Hails Extension of Unemployment Benefits

Jobless Michigan residents can receive compensation for an additional 13 weeks

LANSING- Ray Basham (D-Taylor) today praised Governor Granholm's action to extend unemployment benefits to Michigan residents for another 13 weeks. These additional benefits come from the federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program and do not affect the state's budget. Sen. Basham is the sponsor of Senate Bill 86, a bill he introduced in January of 2007 that would have increased the compensation period for jobless workers to 39 weeks. He was also in constant contact with Michigan's federal legislators calling for assistance for unemployed workers at the national level such as this.

"Too many hard working individuals have exhausted their unemployment benefits and still have not been able to find jobs," said Basham. "Times are tough, and no one knows it like the people of Michigan. We need to help our citizens get back on their feet, and a few more weeks of financial security could make all the difference in the world."

Michigan has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, reaching a seasonally-adjusted 8.5% in May. This is the highest unemployment rate for the state in 16 years, and statistics show approximately 69,000 jobs were lost in the state over the past year. With more unemployed residents and fewer jobs to go around, the extended benefit period will offer some relief for struggling Michigan families.

An agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor was signed last week-the earliest time possible-allowing Michigan to participate in the federal EUC program. This agreement puts Michigan residents on schedule to receive additional unemployment benefits as early as the week of July 20.

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