

BRIDGE for Workers Act

Building on Reemployment Improvements to Deliver Good Employment for Workers Act
Senators Chris Coons, Johnny Isakson, Tim Kaine, and Rob Portman

- The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is a grant program administered by the Department of Labor, for states and territories, to assist individuals receiving earned Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in their transition back to work. The program was expanded and codified into law by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123).
- The BRIDGE for Workers Act allows states greater flexibility in administering RESEA programs by opening up the program to all individuals receiving UI benefits, not just individuals who are likely to exhaust their benefits.
- Increasing flexibility to target UI claimants based on local needs, and from a variety of backgrounds, would ensure that states would be able to use reemployment service grants to serve all workers receiving UI benefits who need them.
- Reemployment services give workers who might otherwise struggle to find new jobs the tools that they need to get back to work—such as individualized career counseling, job search help, and local labor market information—and they can serve as an entry point to the workforce development system.
- Providing reemployment services to all workers will help states get more unemployment beneficiaries back to work quickly and into better jobs with higher earnings.
- Research shows the longer workers are out of work, the harder it can be to maintain their skills, professional network, and stable home life.
- Combining targeted reemployment services with unemployment insurance benefits helps keep people attached to the labor force who might otherwise become discouraged and drop out.
- Unemployment benefits replace less than half of working income, on average, so workers who find new jobs quickly suffer less financial hardship.
- The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the new investments in reemployment services scheduled over the next decade would reduce the budget deficit by \$600 million between 2022 and 2027.
- This legislation is endorsed by the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), the nonpartisan national organization representing all 50 state workforce agencies, D.C., and U.S. territories.