

EARLY Benefits for Workers Act

SENATORS CHRIS COONS (D-DE) & BILL CASSIDY (R-LA)

THE PROBLEM

Workers don't receive reemployment services until many weeks after losing their jobs

Employers across many industries face significant labor shortages, yet many unemployed workers often struggle to find a suitable job. As AI and other technologies change the economy, unemployed workers need more support than ever in identifying how their skills fit into new and emerging industries.



More than 1 in 3 UI beneficiaries exhaust their benefits before securing new employment.

Research consistently shows that the longer a person is unemployed, the more difficult it becomes to find a new job. Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) benefits are designed to help solve this problem—getting unemployed workers back to work faster. However, under current law, states cannot offer RESEA services until a worker's unemployment insurance (UI) claim has been approved. As a result, most workers do not receive this assistance until they have been unemployed for at least several weeks.

THE SOLUTION

Offering basic reemployment services at the time a worker claims unemployment benefits

Instead of waiting for a claim to be adjudicated, offering basic RESEA services at the time a worker claims UI benefits will allow the program to reach more unemployed workers earlier in their unemployment. Many basic RESEA services—such as digital orientations, job search planning materials, and virtual career literacy workshops—can be provided to unemployed workers at little marginal cost to the state.

Expedited Access to Reemployment Learning Yields (EARLY) Benefits for Workers Act

- Authorizes states to utilize 20% of RESEA funds on “early interventions,” making initial RESEA services available to unemployed workers at the time they claim UI benefits.
- Empowers unemployed workers to begin an effective job search process immediately while improving the likelihood that they will find a new job quickly.