

REP. PETE STARK (CA)

SENIOR DEMOCRAT

REP. CAROLYN B. MALONEY (NY)

REP. MELVIN L. WATT (NC)

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SEN. JACK REED (RI)

SEN. EDWARD M. KENNEDY (MA)

SEN. PAUL S. SARBANES (MD)

SEN. JEFF BINGAMAN (NM)

Congress of the United States
Joint Economic Committee
Democrats

108TH CONGRESS

804 HART SENATE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6602
202-224-0372
FAX 202-224-5568
www.senate.gov/~jec/democrats

WENDELL PRIMUS
STAFF DIRECTOR

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Contact: Nan Gibson

202-224-0377

**PAYROLL JOBS REMAIN BELOW PRE-RECESSION LEVEL
FOR 32nd STRAIGHT MONTH, SETTING NEW RECORD**
GOP Has No Plans to Extend Federal UI Benefits Despite 2.4 Million Jobs Deficit

Washington, D.C. – The unemployment rate was essentially unchanged at 5.9 percent in November, and 57,000 payroll jobs were created. Private nonfarm payrolls grew by 50,000 jobs. The manufacturing sector lost another 17,000 jobs, and has now suffered 40 months of losses totaling 2.8 million jobs. Even with four consecutive months of job gains, in November payrolls were still 2.4 million jobs below their level 32 months earlier when the recession began. As a result, President Bush has broken his father's dubious record of job creation futility.

“The labor market finally has a pulse, but the job gains have been much too paltry to take workers' off of life support,” said **Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), Senior Democrat on the Joint Economic Committee (JEC)**. “It's unconscionable that the Republican-controlled Congress plans to let temporary federal unemployment benefits expire two days after Christmas. Each week, about 90,000 out-of-work Americans will lose their unemployment benefits and face serious financial hardships. If President Bush doesn't intervene, he will be the Grinch who stole Christmas from these unemployed workers,” added Stark.

President Bush has failed to provide the leadership necessary to assist unemployed workers. Following the 1990-91 recession, his father's administration provided 20 weeks of temporary federal unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in all states until 1.9 million jobs had been created. Even though the evidence for extending temporary federal UI benefits is clear, the current President Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress have no plans to extend temporary federal UI benefits that are due to expire on December 27.

Both in absolute numbers (2.4 million) and in percentage terms (1.8 percent), the current jobs gap is larger than it was at any point in the recession of the early 1990s. Long-term unemployment rose again in November, so that now nearly one in every four unemployed – over 2 million Americans – has been jobless for more than 26 weeks. The average length of a spell of unemployment rose to over 20 weeks in November, its highest level since early 1984. And regular state UI exhaustions are still more than twice their pre-recession levels. It makes no sense to discontinue the temporary federal UI benefits program in such a weak economy.

Since the start of the Bush recession, the economy has lost 2.9 million private sector jobs. Overall, there are 8.7 million unemployed Americans, and about 4.2 million additional workers who want a job but are not counted among the unemployed. An additional 4.8 million people work part-time because of the weak economy.

The Joint Economic Committee, established under the Employment Act of 1946, was created by Congress to review economic conditions and to analyze the effectiveness of economic policy.

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