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ISSUE UPDATE



DATE: July 27, 2010
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

NAACP-SUPPORTED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXTENSION LEGISLATION IS SIGNED INTO LAW

*BILL PROVIDES JOBLESS BENEFITS FOR OVER 2.5 MILLION
AMERICAN FAMILIES*

THE ISSUE

On Thursday, July 22, 2010, President Obama signed into law a bill, which was strongly supported by the NAACP, which extends federal jobless benefits through the end of November, 2010 to those who had exhausted their normal six months of benefits. The legislation also makes the extension retroactive to June 2, 2010, when the benefits last expired.

This legislation had originally been passed by the House of Representatives in May, but had been stalled in the Senate by members who were concerned that the cost was too high. While the NAACP appreciates concerns about the current size of the national deficit, blocking unemployment insurance is not the proper place to make a stand. It is unfair, indecent and inhumane for the government not to assist those whose very lives may be at stake. With unemployment rates still too high – the national unemployment rate in June 2010 was 9.5%, and among African Americans the rate was 15.4% -- extending unemployment benefits is not only logical, it is the morally right thing to do. It is estimated that more than 2.5 million Americans had seen their benefits expire since June 2. On the third try, the legislation passed the Senate on July 21, 2010.

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