

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3476

To provide for unemployment benefits to workers affected by the 2019 Novel
Coronavirus.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 12, 2020

Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR,
Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the
following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To provide for unemployment benefits to workers affected
by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Coronavirus Worker
5 Relief Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS OR DISASTER DEC-**
2 **LARATIONS FOR CORONAVIRUS.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the definitions in
4 section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
5 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122) shall apply.

6 (b) AUTHORITY.—In any emergency declared by the
7 President under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford
8 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
9 5191) related to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus, in addition
10 to the assistance authorized by section 502 of such Act,
11 the President may provide assistance under section 410
12 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5177) for unemployment and lost
13 wages, including by expanding the eligibility for assistance
14 in accordance with subsection (d).

15 (c) APPLICATION TO MAJOR DISASTER DECLARA-
16 TIONS.—For any major disaster declared under section
17 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
18 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191) for the 2019 Novel
19 Coronavirus, the expanded eligibility criteria in subsection
20 (d) shall apply.

21 (d) ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—In addi-
22 tion to the eligibility criteria for individuals established
23 under section 410 of Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
24 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5177), individ-
25 uals in an area for which an emergency declaration or dis-
26 aster declaration for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus de-

1 scribed in subsection (b) is declared shall be eligible for
2 unemployment assistance under such section 410 if—

3 (1) the individual has experienced a week of un-
4 employment in the area with an active emergency
5 declaration or disaster declaration for the 2019
6 Novel Coronavirus, and as a result of the 2019
7 Novel Coronavirus;

8 (2) the individual has good cause to voluntarily
9 reduce regular work hours or refuse a bona fide
10 offer of employment, or, in the case of an unem-
11 ployed self-employed individual, refuse to resume or
12 commence suitable self-employment, for a reason
13 such as illness or incapacity, family crises, or
14 changed individual or family circumstances in the
15 area for which the emergency declaration or disaster
16 declaration was issued, and as a result of the 2019
17 Novel Coronavirus; or

18 (3) the individual is unable to work due to the
19 result of the immediate Federal, State, Tribal, or
20 local government response to the 2019 Novel
21 Coronavirus, such as—

22 (A) the inaccessibility of the place of em-
23 ployment in the area for which the emergency
24 declaration or disaster declaration was issued
25 due to closure of the place of employment by or

1 at the request of the Federal, State, Tribal, or
2 local government as a result of the 2019 Novel
3 Coronavirus; or

4 (B) the employer of the individual, or the
5 business in the case of a unemployed self-em-
6 ployed individual, prior to the emergency dec-
7 laration or disaster declaration being issued, re-
8 ceived at least a significant amount of the rev-
9 enue or income of the employer or business, as
10 the case may be, from entities that—

11 (i) are located in the area for which
12 the emergency declaration or disaster dec-
13 laration was issued; and

14 (ii) were closed by the Federal, State,
15 Tribal, or local government in immediate
16 response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

17 (e) MINIMUM AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—The assist-
18 ance authorized under this section for a week of unemploy-
19 ment shall be not less than the weekly amount authorized
20 under the unemployment compensation law of the State
21 for which the emergency declaration or disaster declara-
22 tion was issued.

23 (f) WAIVER OF STATE REQUIREMENTS.—Notwith-
24 standing State law, for purposes of assistance authorized
25 under this section—

1 (1) the requirement that an individual be able
2 to work, available to work, and actively seeking work
3 shall not apply; and

4 (2) compensation under section 410 of Robert
5 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
6 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5177) shall be made to an indi-
7 vidual otherwise eligible for such compensation with-
8 out any waiting period.

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