



For Immediate Release  
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Contact:

Scott Mulhauser/Erin Shields  
(202) 224-4515

**BAUCUS PRAISES ACTION TO RESTORE UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS,  
HEALTH CARE COVERAGE FOR OUT-OF-WORK AMERICANS**

**Senate Passes 30-Day Extension of Emergency Unemployment Benefits,  
COBRA Health Care Coverage, Other Important Safety-Net Programs**

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today applauded Senate passage of a 30-day extension of unemployment insurance benefits and eligibility for assistance in paying COBRA health insurance premiums for unemployed workers. These and other important safety-net programs expired February 28 and tonight’s extension will restore access to the critical benefits that millions of Americans depend upon. Baucus has been a leader in Senate efforts to ensure access to these vital programs, and yesterday he introduced a bill, along with Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), to provide a longer-term extension of the benefits American families need to stay afloat in this tough economy.

**“Our agenda is focused on creating good-paying American jobs and yesterday we introduced another bill to help get Americans back to work,”** Baucus said. **“In the meantime, families in Montana and across the country are struggling every day just to get by. The extension we passed tonight will restore the critical safety-net services American families and communities depend on for survival, as we work to pass a longer-term solution and create jobs that will get our economy moving again.”**

In addition to unemployment insurance and COBRA, the legislation also extends measures to protect Medicare payments for doctors, preserve Medicare benefits for seniors and prevent Americans living in poverty from losing access to vital safety-net services.

The bill reverses a 21 percent scheduled payment cut for doctors who provide services through Medicare and TRICARE, ensuring that America’s seniors and military families will continue to have access to their physicians. It also stops scheduled limits on the amount of therapy services seniors can receive through Medicare.

Similarly, the legislation prevents a reduction in the federal poverty level (FPL) caused by a decrease in the average cost of goods resulting from the economic downturn. This will ensure that low-income families may continue to qualify for programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or food stamps, Medicaid and home heating assistance.

The Temporary Extension Act of 2010, H.R. 4691, passed the Senate on a vote of 78 to 19 tonight and will now be sent to the President for his signature.

For more information on the bill Baucus and Reid introduced yesterday, The American Workers, State and Business Relief Act, visit the Finance Committee website at:

<http://finance.senate.gov/press/Bpress/2010press/prb030110b.pdf>.

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